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ANCIENT CHINESE POLITICAL THEORIES

ANCIENT CHINESE POLITICAL THEORIES

BY

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TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER

A WORD OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author takes this occasion to acknowledge with sincere gratitude the heartfelt encouragement rendered him in writing this dissertation by Professors Edwin S. Corwin and William S. Carpenter of Princeton University, two of the most inspiring and sympathetic teachers he has ever had.

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CHAPTER I

EARLIEST POLITICAL CONCEPTIONS

From the Twenty-Fourth to the Eighth Century Before Christ

(As Found in "The Book of History" and Evidenced by Other Ancient Writings)

IT is difficult to survey the thought of any age; it is more than difficult to seek out the general, vague, and unsystematic ideas which were buried in the hidden recesses of the minds of the people of that age and give them definite and orderly expression. And then the task becomes well-nigh impossible, when that age which is to be studied extends over a period of almost sixteen centuries and goes back to the remotest antiquity of the "ancient and honorable," when language was but in the cradle and logic was only in the process of making, and when there were

> "No traces left of all the busy scene
> But that remembrance says: 'The things have been.'"

But such must be the lot of one who wishes to explore the earliest political conceptions of Chinese civilization. Like the legendary history that stretches back to the creation of the world, this period, with which we are dealing and of which some reliable records have been left to us,

is still more or less enshrouded in foggy myth. A brief chronology may, perhaps, be useful here. The twenty-fourth century before Christ may well be regarded as an auspicious beginning for the Celestial empire. At that time lived the famous emperors Yao and Shun, who governed and civilized the whole nation, that is, the northern part of the present China, by their own exemplary virtues and who, upon their deaths, bequeathed their thrones, not to their own children, but to the most meritorious of their subjects, whom they had raised above the common ruck. Then came Yü the Great, whose chief feat was the abating of the great flood which then raged in the empire. Yü was succeeded by his own son, Chi, who, as the records tell us, won the sceptor by popular approval of his own personal virtues, but thereby established the principle of hereditary succession and founded the dynasty of Hsia. By the middle of the eighteenth century before Christ, however, it was overthrown by King Tang of Shang, and the dynasty of Yin ruled in its stead. This, in turn, was superseded in 1121 B.C. by the dynasty of Chow, whose founders were the famous kings, Wen and Wu. When we reach the eighth century, the imperial sway of Chow is already well on its way of decline, and several feudal states have begun to rise and struggle for power.

From even such a bird's-eye view as this, one is impressed with the immense task at hand.

Sixteen centuries are now under our survey. During this time, revolutions take place, and dynasties succeed one another. Moreover, there are frequent and tremendous social changes such as one finds only in the formative period of a civilization. Take the development of government, for example. There is abundant proof that it began in a nation of loosely conglomerated tribes and ended in a highly organized feudal state. If only we could trace the footprints of such mammoth social evolutions and reconstruct their gradual growth with word pictures true to life, an invaluable service would have been done to the field of political science.

But to us this is denied. At the very outset we are confronted with a most disastrous impediment —the scantiness of material. There are only eight books which are supposed to have genuine connections with this period.[1] Of the eight, only three may truly be said to have been written during this long period of time[2] and of these only one may be regarded as a fertile mine under which definite political conceptions, vague and unsystematic though they may be, are now ensconced, that is, "The Book of History," which is supposed to consist of the official records of ancient times and which was later edited by Confucius.

[1] "The Book of History," "The Book of Poetry," a part of "The Book of Changes," "The Book of Ceremonies and Rites," the so-called "Lost Book of Chow," "The Sayings of Nations," "The Chronicles of Cho," "The Li of Chow," "The Records of History."

[2] "The Book of History," "The Book of Poetry," and "The Book of Changes."

And it is chiefly from this book that we shall gather our material for this chapter.

There is some objection to our doing this. Contentions are not lacking that many sections of "The Book of History" are not reliable. But of textual controversies it is our principle to steer clear. Besides, in matters the truth of which is mainly an interpretation, something can always be said on either side, and we propose here to give the affirmative the benefit of the doubt. Then, it may appear to people of critical proclivity that, as the records in the book deal with different times, it may be well for us to divide this long period into sections and give each of them a separate treatment. But this is met by two arguments. In the first place, while the material may be sufficient for a general discussion, it will not be enough to permit of a division. Secondly, there are instances in which the records, while referring to earlier times, were undoubtedly written at later dates. To what period should these be assigned? Any decision in such cases would appear arbitrary and to beg the question. Under these circumstances, therefore, we believe that it is best and safest, for this task of ours at least, to sink the particular in the general—to give only a survey of the prominent points in this period, and not to enter into tangled woods and swamps where we must eventually lose our way. To have to make statements that may

appear to others too broad is certainly regrettable; but it is at least a consolation to be assured that, no matter what circumstances we may attribute to this period, they must have happened sometime within it though we do not know exactly when. We do not consider this satisfactory; but we deem it justifiable.

But before we enter into our main discussion, it is perhaps also wise for us to answer another question which Western readers may be anxious to raise. To a foreign skeptic, the period may seem too remote and the people too primitive to have any serious political conceptions at all. But this is not true. While we admit that a great part of the history of this period is more or less enshrouded in myth, what little we do know about it gives the question a firm denial. Not to speak of the later dynasties, the government of China at the very middle of the twenty-fourth century before Christ seems to have reached a high degree of organized excellence. All the regions that had by then been considered civilized acclaimed one emperor, although the empire was, as we have said, divided into numerous states and clans. A system of supervision over the latter by the emperor had already been contrived. It is recorded in "The Book of History" as the regulations of Emperor Shun that

"in every five years there was one tour of inspection. And from the four quarters of the empire princes came to render their homage. They set forth a report of their government

in words. They were clearly tested by their works. They received chariots and robes according to their services."[1]

The organization of the central government itself was also by no means a negligible quantity. Emperor Shun seems to have had a cabinet which consisted of a prime minister, whose chief duty just then was the abatement of the great flood then raging, and eight other ministers in charge of different functions, namely: Agriculture; Education; Justice; Public Works; Plants, Trees, Fowls, and Animals; Ceremonies and Rites; Music; and Proclamations.[2] No better proof can be produced to support our statement than the chapter entitled "The Tribute of Yü" in "The Book of History." It was a geographical survey of the whole empire, along with a classification of the land in its different sections and a gradation of the tributes which they respectively must pay. This belonged to the reign of Yü, which was from 2204 to 2196 B.C. How far the governmental organization subsequently advanced, we need not tell here; these few evidences themselves prove that Chinese civilization, at the very beginning of this period, had already reached such a degree of excellence that the appearance of clear, definite political conceptions was not only possible, but a certain fact.

This preliminary question having been disposed of, we now turn to the main topic. As in all

1 "The Canon of Shun."
2 See "The Canon of Shun."

early civilizations, the first political conceptions of the Chinese were closely interwoven with their religious beliefs. Touching the period with which we are now dealing, they seem to have already evolved a sort of monotheism. The unknown power, which is almighty, they designate as Heaven, or God. Thus sings "The Book of Poetry":

> "O bright and high Heaven
> Who enlightenest and rulest this lower world." [1]

Because He rules the world, hence even the noblest of men, the emperor himself, must render Him homage. Because He enlightens the world, hence everything must be done according to His regulations and in His name. Says Kao-Yao, the first known minister of justice in Chinese history, in his counsels to Emperor Yü: [2]

> "From Heaven are the social arrangements with their several duties; to us it is given to enforce these five duties, and to these five we must render our obedience. (Duties and ceremonies belonging to the five social relationships of husband and wife, father and son, sovereign and subject, elder and younger brother, and friends.) From Heaven are the social distinctions with their several ceremonies; from us proceed the observance of these five ceremonies, and then do they appear in regular practice! When sovereign and ministers show a common reverence and respect for these, do they not harmonize the moral nature of the people? Heaven graciously distinguishes the virtuous; are there not the five habiliments, five decorations for them? Heaven punishes the guilty; are there not the five punishments to be severally used for

[1] Pt. II, Bk. VI, Ode 3.
[2] "The Counsels of Kao-Yao," "The Book of History."

that purpose? The business of government!—ought we not to be earnest in it? Ought we not to be earnest in it?"

Thus from Heaven and by Heaven is everything derived and done; and men are but the agents of God. In the words of Kao-Yao, "The work is Heaven's; it is men's to act for it."[1] And only he is to be praised who gives perfect obedience to God. Hence, when the poets of the dynasty of Chow sing their praise of King Wen, they say,

> "God said to King Wen,
> I am pleased with your intelligent virtue
> Not loudly proclaimed nor portrayed,
> Without extravagance and changeableness,
> Without consciousness of effort on your part,
> In accordance with the pattern of God."[2]

But what is the pattern of God? How is it revealed to men? Through what procedure? By what means? The answers to these questions are found, exactly like many other religious teachings, in men themselves and their inherent nature. "The people are born good," says "The Book of History" in one place. (Chuen Chen) "God," declares King Tang, the founder of the dynasty of Yin, in another "has conferred upon the inferior people a moral sense as their invariable nature."[3] And in "The Book of Poetry" we also find:

1 "The Counsels of Kao-Yao," "The Book of History."
2 "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 7.
3 "The Announcement of Tang."

"Heaven, in giving birth to the multitudes of the people
To every faculty and relationship annexed its law
The people possess this constant nature
And consequently love virtue."[1]

The revelation of the divine law to men is, therefore, through men themselves. And from this basis the ancient Chinese begin to construct their political system. For example, they declare that it is in accordance with the will of Heaven that there ought to be a ruler in the realm.

"As Heaven creates people with desires, without a ruler they must fall into disorder."[2]

Again,

"Heaven, to protect the inferior people, made for them rulers, and made for them instructors, that they might be able to aid God and secure the tranquillity of the four quarters of the empire."[3]

Hence, sovereigns, it may be truly said, are made in Heaven. They are the people who have received special gifts from God both in virtue and in talent. And it is their divine appointment to govern this earth. Thus declares King Wu, the founder of the Chow dynasty:

"Heaven and Earth is the parent of all creatures; and of all creatures man is the most highly endowed. The most sincere and intelligent of men becomes the great sovereign; and the great sovereign is the parent of the people."[4]

1 "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. III, Ode 6.
2 "The Announcement of Chung-Hwei," "The Book of History."
3 "The Great Declaration," "The Book of History."
4 *Ibid.*

We have here, therefore, a theory somewhat like the prevalent doctrines in medieval Europe as explained in "Vindiciæ Contra Tyrannos." Here we have the same triangle—God, the people, and the sovereign. Thus, it is not strange that in some respects of their sequence the two theories are not unlike each other, especially in regard to the relationships among the three factors. Those between God and the people, and between God and the sovereign, can be summarized in the original language of "The Book of History": "Heaven loves the people; and the sovereign must obey Heaven."[1] Furthermore, it is said that "Heaven is compassionate toward the people. What the people desire, Heaven will be found to give effect to."[2] As it has been shown that the divine law is revealed to men through themselves, it is therefore impossible for the sovereign to make a distinction between the will of God and that of the masses as a whole. Hence we find passages like the following:

> "Heaven sees as our people see; Heaven hears as our people hear."[3]

> "Heaven is keen in hearing and seeing because our people are keen in hearing and seeing. Heaven reveals its terrors as our people display their power. Such connection there is between the upper and lower worlds. How reverent ought the masters of the Earth to be!"[4]

[1] "The Great Declaration."
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] "The Counsels of Kao-Yao."

Between the sovereign and the people, the relationship is that of interdependence. They mutually help each other to fulfill their respective functions on the earth:

"Without the sovereign the people cannot have the guidance which is necessary to their livelihood; without the people, the sovereign could have no sway over the four quarters of the empire." [1]

"Of all who are to be loved, is not the sovereign the chief? Of all who are to be feared, are not the people the chief? If the multitude were without the sovereign, whom should they sustain aloft? If the sovereign had not the multitude, there would be none to guard the country for him." [2]

"The sovereign without the people has none whom he can employ; and the people without the sovereign have none whom they can serve. Do not consider yourself (King) so enlarged as to deem others small in comparison. If ordinary men and women do not find the opportunity to give full development to their virtue, the people's lord will be without the proper aids to complete his function." [3]

With all these restrictions the sovereign's position is by no means enviable. On earth, he is supposed to have "come here as the vicegerent of God," [4] and is styled the "one man." Though all are created by God, only he is regarded as the "Son of Heaven," or the "Eldest Son of Heaven." [5] And upon his death he may reasonably hope, if he does his duties well, to secure a comfortable seat in the happy sphere above.

[1] "Tai-Ch'ia," ii.
[2] "The Counsels of Yü the Great."
[3] "Both Had One Virtue," "The Book of History."
[4] "The Announcement of Shao."
[5] *Ibid.*

Thus the poets sing:

> "King Wen is on high
> Oh! bright is he in heaven.
>
> King Wen ascends and descends
> On the left and right of God." [1]

In addition, if he is not satisfied with these, he may be content with some more substantial attributes which are his. Thus announces "The Book of Poetry" in one place: "Under the wide Heaven, all is the king's land. Within the sea boundaries of the land, all are the king's subjects." [2] Moreover, the ancient Chinese seem to have had a more or less clear notion of sovereignty; and this they assign to their ruler. It is recorded in "The Book of History" as the essential element of government that

> "it belongs only to the sovereign to confer favors, to display the terrors of majesty, and to receive the revenues of the empire. There should be no such thing as a minister conferring favors, displaying the terrors of majesty, or receiving the revenues of the empire." [3]

Enviable as the sovereign's position is, yet he is not entirely devoid of anxiety. When a king of the dynasty of Hsia does not carry out his duties conscientiously, one of the princes writes this song to give him a timely warning:

> "Our royal ancestor (Yü) had a teaching:
> The people should be cherished,
> But not downtrodden.
> The people are the root of the country.

[1] Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 1.
[2] *Id.*, Pt. II, Bk. VI, Ode 1.
[3] "The Great Plan."

The root firm, the country is tranquil.
When I look throughout the empire,
Of the simple men and simple women,
Any one may surpass me.
If I, the one man, err repeatedly,
Should dissatisfaction be waited for till it is open?
Before it is seen, it should be guarded against.
In my relation to the millions of the people,
I should feel as much anxiety as if I were driving six horses with rotten reins.
The ruler of men—
How can he but be reverent of his duty!"[1]

Also, we hear a duke of the dynasty of Chow counsel his king:

"Oh! God dwelling in the great heaven has changed his eldest son and withdrawn his appointment from the dynasty of Yin. Now, our king has received that decree. Unbounded is the happiness connected with it; and unbounded is the anxiety,—oh, how can he be other than reverent!"[2]

Indeed, the sovereign has much to be anxious about. His "Great Place" is not always as stable as he may desire; for

"the favor of Heaven is not easily preserved. Heaven is hard to be depended upon. Men lose its favoring appointment because they cannot pursue and carry out the reverence and brilliant virtue of their forefathers."[3]

We read also at another place:

"The ways of God are not invariable. On the good-doer he sends down all blessings; and on the evildoer he sends down all miseries. Do you but be virtuous, and the

[1] "The Songs of the Five Sons."
[2] "The Announcement of Shao."
[3] "Prince Shih."

myriad regions will have cause for congratulation. If you be not virtuous . . . they will bring the ruin of your ancestral temple."[1]

For the example of the former, we have the instance of King Wen, founder of the dynasty of Chow.

"This King Wen
Watchfully and reverently,
With entire intelligence, served God,
And so secured the great blessing.
His virtue was without deflection
And in consequence he received [the allegiance of] the states from all quarters."[2]

For the example of the latter, we have the last rulers of the dynasties of Hsia and Yin. "The Book of History" records the words of the greatest minister of the Yin dynasty who had assisted in its establishment:

"Of old, the earlier sovereigns of Hsia cultivated earnestly their virtue, and there were no calamities from Heaven. . . . But their descendants did not follow their example, and Great Heaven sent down calamities, employing the agency of our ruler who had received its favoring appointment."[3]

And when the poets of Chow speak of the dynasty of Yin, they use almost the same words:

"The illustration of illustrious virtue is required below,
And the dread majesty is on high.
Heaven is not readily to be relied on;
It is not easy to be king.

[1] "Instructions of Yi."
[2] "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 2.
[3] "Instructions of Yi."

Yin's rightful heir to the heavenly seat
Was not permitted to possess the kingdom."[1]

"King Wen said, 'Alas!
You [sovereign of] Yin-Shang,
It is not God who has caused this evil time,
But it arises from Yin's not using the old ways.
Although you have not old experienced men,
There are still the ancient statutes and laws;
But even to these you will not listen,
And so your great appointment is being overthrown!"[2]

Abundant examples may be found that illustrate this principle. In short, God confers and withdraws his appointment according to the virtue of the ruler himself. If he preserves or loses his "Great Place," he has only himself to approve or to blame. It is even as the minister of Yin says:

"Oh! it is difficult to rely on Heaven. Its appointments are not constant. But if the sovereign see to it that his virtue itself be constant, he will preserve his throne; if his virtue be not constant, these nine provinces will all be lost to him."[3]

So much have we said about the necessity of a sovereign to practice virtue and the possibility of Heaven to alter His appointment. But what is the criterion of virtue, upon which God will base His judgment? Not touching the duties of the sovereign which we shall retail later, we want to answer this question first. The main scale by which Heaven measures His "Eldest Sons" is

[1] "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 2.
[2] *Id.*, Pt. III, Bk. III, Ode 1.
[3] "Both Had One Virtue."

whether or not they are found oppressing the people. If they are, then doomed is their lot. Thus when Tang of Shang was about to assail the throne of the last of the Hsias, he made this denunciation:

> "The sovereign of Hsia has committed many crimes, and it is the charge of Heaven to destroy him. . . . The king of Hsia does nothing but exhaust the strength of his people, and exercise oppression in the cities of Hsia. His people have all become resentful (in his service) and will not assist him. They are saying, 'When will this sun expire? Would that we could perish with thee!' Such is the course of the sovereign of Hsia, and now I must go (and execute the will of Heaven)."[1]

When Tang had accomplished the overthrow of Hsia, it was with the same note that he proclaimed his success:

> "The king of Hsia extinguished his virtue and played the tyrant, extending his oppression to you, the people of myriad regions. Suffering from his cruel injuries and unable to endure their pain, you protested with one accord your innocence to the Spirits of Heaven and Earth. The Way of Heaven is to bless the good and punish the evil. It sent down calamities on the house of Hsia to manifest its crimes. Therefore, I, the insignificant person, charged with the decree of Heaven to display its terrors, did not dare forgive (the criminal). I presumed to use a dark-colored sacrifice, and made clear announcement to the spiritual sovereign of the High Heavens, requesting leave to deal with the guilty ruler of Hsia. . . . High Heaven truly showed its favor to the inferior people, and the criminal has been degraded and subjected. Heaven's appointment is without error; and now brilliantly like the blossoming of flowers and trees, the millions of people show a revivification."[2]

[1] "The Declaration of Tang."
[2] "The Announcement of Tang."

From this we gather that Heaven is supposed to punish oppressive kings, and make the people, or some chosen one of the people, His agent in the execution of His will. But as the sovereign has been generally revered as the most gifted of men and the "Eldest Son of Heaven," the position of Heaven's agent assumes some very embarrassing aspects. But where a thing is done, an explanation and justification can always be supplied. Hence, when King Tang, after his epoch-making success, "feels a sense of shame on account of his conduct," one of his ministers is not slow to offer his sore conscience this consolation:

> "Oh! as Heaven creates people with desires, without a ruler they must fall into disorder. So Heaven creates also the man of intelligence whose business it is to regulate them. The sovereign of Hsia had his virtue all obscured, and the people were as if fallen amid mire or burning charcoal. Thereupon Heaven gifted Your Majesty with valor and wisdom to serve as a beacon and guidance to the myriad states, and to continue the old ways of Yü. You are now only following the standard course, honoring and obeying the appointment of Heaven. The king of Hsia was an offender, falsely pretending to the sanction of supreme Heaven, to spread abroad his commands among the people. On this account God viewed him with disapprobation, caused our Shang to receive his appointment, and employed you to enlighten the multitudes of the people."[1]

Thus we see that the first revolutionists seem to have justified their conduct as a duty towards the divine power above. Tang himself uses this

[1] "The Announcement of Chung-Hwei."

argument also in his denunciation of the last of the Hsias:

> "It is not I, the insignificant person, who dare to undertake a rebellious enterprise; but the sovereign of Hsia has committed many crimes, and it is the charge of Heaven to destroy him. . . . The sovereign of Hsia is an offender, and I, fearing God, dare not but punish him."[1]

And when King Wu of Chow inflicts upon the descendants of Tang what Tang has done to the Hsias, he wields the same weapon in his declaration: "The iniquity of Shang is full, Heaven gives command to destroy it. If I did not comply with Heaven, my iniquity would be as great."[2]

In a sense, therefore, this may well be called the duty of revolution. At first it was merely that and nothing more. For the revolutionists only obey the decree of Heaven; and the right of revolution—to be more exact, the right to alter His appointment—belongs to God and God alone. But as time advances, a more radical trend of thought begins to appear. As Heaven's will, it had long been thought, is manifested in the will of the people, it cannot but soon be discovered that the people, when oppressed, have a perfect right to rebel, and, when rebelling, are but following the command of Heaven. Thus the right of God to change His appointment becomes, in the time of King Wu, a sponsor to the people's right of revolution. So, in addition to his decree to render obedience to the divine command, King

1 "The Declaration of Tang."
2 "The Great Declaration."

Wu also makes the following declaration to the king of Shang, called by him the "Solitary Fellow" in the sense of his being totally alienated from the people:

"The ancients have said, 'He who soothes us is our sovereign; he who oppresses us is our foe.' The Solitary Fellow Sow (name of the king of Shang), having exercised great tyranny, is your perpetual foe.

"In planting virtue, strive to make it great; in ridding of evil, strive to nip it from the root. Hence I, the insignificant person, do wish to help you, my numerous men, to exterminate your foe." [1]

With such sensitive spirits, both high and low, both godly and terrestrial to please, it is natural that the former sovereigns seem to entertain a particularly anxious concern about the fulfillment of their duties. Advice and cautions rendered to the former kings to this effect abound in "The Book of History" and "The Book of Poetry." To choose random examples, thus does the famous minister of Shang advise the young and recalcitrant heir of Tang:

"Oh! Heaven has no affections; only to the reverent does it show affection. The people have no constant attachments; only to Him are they attached, who is benevolent. The spirits do not always accept the sacrifices which are offered to them; they accept only the sacrifice of the sincere. A place of difficulty is truly the Heaven-conferred seat!" [2]

[1] "The Great Declaration."
[2] "Tai-Ch'ia," iii.

In the same tone once spoke the famous duke of Chow, brother of King Wu, of whom we shall speak more later:[1]

> "Great Heaven has no affections: it helps only the virtuous. The people's hearts are not constant; they cherish only the kind. Acts of good are various, but they contribute in common to good government. Acts of evil are diverse, but they contribute in common to disorder. Do you be cautious!"[2]

And it is with genuine feeling that the poets sing this warning to their king:

> "Revere the anger of Heaven
> And presume not to make sport or be idle.
> Revere the changing moods of Heaven
> And presume not to drive about at your pleasure.
> Great Heaven is intelligent,
> And is with you in all your goings.
> Great Heaven is clear-seeing,
> And is with you in your wanderings and indulgences."[3]

Since we have shown that Heaven needs to be so reverently feared, that to reign over millions is like driving "six horses with rotten reins," and that it is a requirement of God that sovereigns should fulfill their duties, we may now discuss what these duties are. In the first place, the sovereign must devote his entire attention to the government of his people, and not to his own selfish interests. It is recorded in "The Book of History" as the words of a famous minister to his king:

1 See Chap. II.
2 "The Charge of Ch'ai Chung."
3 "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. II, Ode 10.

"Oh! intelligent kings are in reverent accordance with the ways of Heaven. The founding of states, and setting up of capital; the appointing of sovereign-kings, of princes and dukes, with their great and humble officers;—these were not designed to minister to the idleness and the pleasure of one, but for the good government of the people."[1]

In one of the promulgations of a famous king of the dynasty of Yin, we also find a passage in which the sovereign tries to impress the same idea upon his ministers:

"Ah, ye chiefs of regions, ye heads of departments, all ye, the hundreds of officers, would that ye were animated by a true sympathy! I will exert myself in the selection and guiding of you. Do you think reverently of my multitudes? I will not employ those who are fond of wealth; but those who are vigorously yet reverently laboring for the livelihood and increase of the people, nourishing and planning for their enduring settlement, I will use and respect.

"I have now brought forward and announced to you my mind, whom I approve and whom I disallow. Let none of you but reverence my will. Do not seek to accumulate wealth and precious things; but in fostering the life of the people seek to find your merit. Reverently display your virtue on behalf of the people. Forever maintain this one heart."[2]

The second duty of the sovereign has already been hinted at in the first; it is that he must govern for the welfare of the people. This seems to consist of three elements, of which peace is one. We shall give a few instances:

[1] "The Charge of Yueh," ii.
[2] "Pan-Keng," iii.

"God has conferred upon the inferior people a moral sense as their invariable nature. But to cause them tranquilly to pursue the course which it would indicate is the work of a sovereign." [1]

"Says the king, . . . 'When I think clearly of the people, I see they are to be led to happiness and tranquillity. I often think of the virtue of the former wise kings of Yin, whereby they tranquilized and regulated the people, and rouse myself to the same end. The people are always ready to follow a leader. If one does not lead them, he cannot be said to exercise a government in the state.'" [2]

"King Wen is famous,
Yes, he is very famous.
What he sought was the repose of the people,
What he saw was the completion of his work.
A sovereign true was King Wen." [3]

In securing peace for the people, the sovereign is indeed "in accordance with the pattern of God." For such is also his aim, as the poets tell us:

"Great is God,
Beholding this lower world in majesty.
He surveyed the four quarters of the empire
Seeking for some one to give settlement to the people." [4]

The second phase of the welfare of the people is their sustenance. Says Yü the Great to Emperor Shun:

"Think of these things, O Emperor. Virtue is seen in the goodness of government; and the essence of government is to nourish the people." [5]

1 "The Announcement of Tang."
2 "The Announcement of K'ang."
3 "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 10.
4 Id., Part III, Bk. I, Ode 7.
5 "Counsels of Yü the Great."

And expounds a king of the dynasty of Yin:

> "Oh, of old time my royal predecessors cherished above everything a respective care of the people, who again upheld their sovereign with a mutual sympathy. Seldom was it that they could not cope with any calamitous time that Heaven might send down."[1]

A prince of the dynasty of Chow also subscribes to the doctrine. When he awards a dukedom to one of his younger brothers, he also gives him this advice: "Treat the people as if you were taking care of your infants, and the people will be tranquil and orderly."[2] This is also the inspiration for the poets to sing:

> "To be rejoiced in are ye noble men,
> Parents of the people."[3]

Verily, as the parent would take care of his children, so must the sovereign guard the welfare of his subjects. And this is not confined to the physical side; the spiritual side is included as well. So here we have the third element of the welfare of the people: their moral development and spiritual repose. For all these, the sovereign is responsible to God. We have already seen that any oppressive conduct on the part of the ruler may cause Heaven to withdraw from him the divine appointment. We are now to see that any wrong on the part of the subjects, even when committed by themselves, may be chargeable to

[1] "Pan-Keng," ii.
[2] "The Announcement of K'ang."
[3] "The Book of Poetry," Pt. II, Bk. II, Ode 3.

the sovereign. In "The Announcement of Tang" upon his accession to the throne, he speaks thus to the people:

> "Let every one observe the statutes so that we may receive the favors of Heaven. The good in you I will not dare conceal; and for evil in me, I will not dare forgive myself. For these things are all to be examined in the mind of God. When guilt is found anywhere in you who occupy the myriad regions, it must rest on me. When guilt is found in me, the one man, it will not attach to you who occupy the myriad regions."

A king of Chow also makes the following statement:

> "Now, the people are not quiet; they have not stilled their minds; notwithstanding my frequent leading of them, they have not come to accord with my government. I reflect on Heaven's severe punishments, but I do not murmur. For the crimes of the people, however great or many, are all chargeable on me. And then, think, how much more shall this be said when the report of them goes up so manifestly to Heaven!"[1]

To summarize, we find no nobler sentiment ever expressed by a ruler about his duty to secure the welfare of the people than this: "If a single man is not well settled, it is my fault."[2]

This leads us to the third duty of the sovereign: He must direct the people to the right course by his own example. We can easily see that this is a derivation of the idea that only the most virtuous of men is qualified to receive the appointment of Heaven. Like all

1 "The Announcement of K'ang."
2 "The Charge of Yueh."

early peoples whose natures maintain as yet an undefiled simplicity, the ancient Chinese believed in the perfectibility of men and in the efficacy of converting others to good by one's personal example. As it is the duty of the sovereign to see to it that every subject of his is well settled, both physically and morally, it is therefore necessary that he should himself be a paragon of virtue.

"The people are born good, and are changed by external things, so that they resist the commands of their superiors and follow their own whims. Do you but reverently observe all the statutes and keep to virtue; and all of them will be converted and truly advance to a great degree of excellence." [1]

"It is for him who is in the position of king to overtop all with his virtue. In that case, the people will imitate him throughout the empire, and the king will become truly illustrious." [2]

"If you can be correct in your own person, none will dare but be correct. The minds of the people are not balanced; they must be guided by your own balance." [3]

Also, the poets of Chow make this eulogy of King Wu:

"Always striving to accord with the will of Heaven,
He secured the confidence due to a king.
He secured the confidence due a king
And became the pattern for the lower world." [4]

Many more quotations we can give to this effect; but these we propose to reserve for later discussion.

[1] "Chuen-Ch'en."
[2] "The Announcement of Shao."
[3] "Chuen-Ya."
[4] "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 9.

Thus we have outlined the few outstanding duties of the sovereign, as the ancient Chinese conceived them: to devote his whole life to government, to consecrate the government to the sole welfare of the people, physical and spiritual, and to secure the spiritual welfare of the people by directing them to the right course through his own personal example. We cannot conclude this part of our topic better than by quoting a passage from the chapter entitled "The Great Plan" in "The Book of History":

> "The sovereign having established his highest points of excellence, he gathers around himself . . . happiness, and then diffuses it so as to bestow it upon his people. . . . All the multitudes, instructed in this amplification of the royal excellence, and carrying it into practice so as to be near to the glory of the Son of Heaven, will say: 'The Son of Heaven is the parent of the people; and so becomes the sovereign of the empire.'"

This explains the duties of the sovereign. The theory of exemplary kingship, however, does not stop at being a doctrine of duty only. It plays a part of far greater importance in the minds of the ancient Chinese, and incurs two consequences which, as we shall show later, make a great impression upon all Chinese political theories that are to follow. The first of these is the cultivation of a firm belief in the merits of government by man. This is natural. For he who believes in the perfectibility of men believes also in the perfectibility of government, and he who desires the latter deems it possible only through the former.

Thus, in the ancient history of China, nothing is of greater importance to the sovereign, and no wish is more ardent on the part of the people than that of distinguishing the virtuous and talented. Evidences are not lacking to support the assertion that in the remotest times an emperor was elected by the different chiefs of clans on the basis of his own personal virtue.[1] There is positive proof that even in the times of Emperors Yao and Shun the chiefs and the people still possessed a certain right to give their final approval to their sovereign's successor, chosen by himself. A remarkable passage occurs in the work of Mencius, which deals with the succession of Shun to Yao, the former having been preferred by the latter as his heir, instead of his own son.

> "After the death of Yao, Shun withdrew in favor of the son of Yao to the south of South River. But the princes of the empire, who came to render their homage, came not to the son of Yao, but to Shun. And those who had disputes to litigate went not to the son of Yao, but to Shun. And those who sang, sang not to Yao's son, but to Shun. . . It was after these things that he went to the Middle Kingdom and ascended the emperor's throne."[2]

So did Mencius depict the succession of Shun to Yao. So did he also depict the succession of Yü to Shun. But when Yü died, though he had intended to follow the example of his predecessors and offered his minister Yi to the people as his

[1] See C. C. Liang's "A History of Political Thoughts Before the Dynasty of Chin," pp. 62 ff.

[2] "The Book of History," Bk. V, Pt. I, Ch. 5.

heir instead of his son Ch'i, a different course of events took place. Thus narrates Mencius:

> "After Yü's death . . . Yi withdrew in favor of Yü's son to the north of Mount Chi. But the princes of the empire who came to render their homage, and those who had disputes to litigate, went not to Yi, but to Ch'i, saying, 'This is our sovereign's son.' And those who sang, sang not of Yi, but of Ch'i, saying, 'This is our sovereign's son.'" [1]

What is it that makes all this difference? The answer is found in the fact that Ch'i was known for his personal virtue, while the sons of Yao and of Shun were not. These two facts, when put together, illustrate the significance of the belief of the ancient Chinese in the merits of government by man.

In this common belief the sovereigns, of course, also had a share. There is no better and no nobler proof of this than the cases of Yao and Shun who had picked out the most meritorious of their people, raised them at first to the rank of chief minister, and then made them their respective successors.[2] On the one hand, this shows their extreme piety towards Heaven, whose will it is that their sovereigns be created solely for the benefit of the people. On the other hand, it witnesses their strong belief that the welfare of the people can only be secured to its greatest extent with the ablest and most virtuous of them as their ruler. When, in later times, hereditary

[1] "The Book of History," Bk. V, Pt. I, Ch. 6.
[2] See the Canons of Yao and Shun in "The Book of History."

succession becomes a fixed principle, this idea maintains none the less strong a hold upon the minds of the ancient kings. They still remember the counsels of Kao-Yao to Yü the Great, that government "lies in knowing men and giving repose to the people." Thus it is said in one of the books of Chow that "intelligent kings, in establishing their governments, care not so much about the offices as about the men."[1] And "The Book of Poetry," mourning over the calamities of the times, sings this in sorrow:

"The Sun and the Moon announce evil,
Not keeping to their proper paths.
All through the kingdom there is no proper government
Because the good are not employed."[2]

Hence, though the later kings do not follow exactly the footmarks of Yao and Shun, nevertheless they deem it a duty as well as a necessity to seek out the meritorious to be their ministers. And in accomplishing this, they do not neglect to search in stations humble and lowly. The history of China, in this period as well as in others, shows many instances of such endeavors. For a few of the best known ones, we may mention that of the famous minister of Shang, of whom we have already spoken several times, who was serving as a household menial — to be particular, a cook — when sought out by King Tang to be his adviser and teacher; and that of another who was a

[1] "The Organization of Chow."
[2] Pt. II, Bk. IV, Ode 9.

bricklayer (Fu Yueh) and still of another who was a fisherman (Lu Wan).

So much for the common belief in the merits of government by man. The other significant sequel to the theory of exemplary kingship is the evolution of a faith in the possibility of conquest by virtue. When a later historian summarized the accomplishments of an emperor living at the beginning of this period, he made his statement: "He cultivated his own person, and all under Heaven rendered him allegiance."[1] This is exactly the essence of the doctrine which we have just mentioned. If only one be sufficiently virtuous, the ancients believe, all who have contact with him cannot help being converted to good. Thus he becomes a beacon to any one who may come near to him; and gradually his light will penetrate into the farthest corners of darkness until all will follow him as a teacher and obey him as a sovereign. Hence, we hear from the poets:

"Take your pattern from King Wen,
And the myriad regions will repose confidence in you."[2]

Also,

"What is most powerful is being a man;
Its influence will be felt throughout the empire.
What is most distinguished is being virtuous;
It will secure the imitation of all the princes."[3]

[1] "The Records of History"—"The Records of the Five Emperors."
[2] "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 1.
[3] *Id.*, Pt. IV, Bk. I, Ode 4.

These quotations show the results of the practice of virtue. We shall also give some to illustrate the process by which the ancient Chinese thought that the influence of virtue might spread. The poets sing of King Wen:

> "And his example acted on his wife,
> Extended to his brethren,
> And was felt by all the clans and states." [1]

It is also recorded in "The Book of History" as advice given by the famous minister of Shang to his youthful king:

> "Now Your Majesty is entering upon the inheritance of his (referring to King Tang, the young king's father) virtue, everything depends upon how you commence your reign. To set up love, it is for you to love your kindred; to set up respect, it is for you to respect the elders. The commencement is in the family and the domain; the consummation is in the empire." [2]

Again, when the later historians eulogize Yao, they make this statement:

> "He was reverential, intelligent, accomplished, and thoughtful — naturally and without effort. Sincerely dutiful he was, and capable of all self-sacrifice. The brilliancy of his virtue reached to the four extremities of the empire and extended from Earth to Heaven.
>
> "He was able to distinguish the virtuous and talented. And thus he proceeded to attach to himself the nine classes of his kindred. The nine classes having been harmonized, he regulated and polished the people of his domain. His people having become brightly intelligent, he united and harmonized the myriad states of the empire. And lo! the black-haired people were transformed. The result was universal concord." [3]

[1] "The Book of Poetry," Pt. III, Bk. I, Ode 6.
[2] "The Instructions of E."
[3] "The Cannon of Yao."

The whole process may, therefore, be likened to the throwing of a stone of some weight into water. The stone is the individual. If his weight be heavy enough, he will begin to make circles around himself; and these will expand and expand till the farthest corners of the whole surface are covered with its ripplings.

The theory, of course, turns entirely around the assumption that people will naturally become good, when brought into contact with an excellent example. Whether or not this is intrinsically possible, we do not intend to discuss here. It suffices for us to know that the ancient Chinese did believe so. There are several instances of such conversion, which are recorded in their history and of which we think useful to narrate a typical example here. It refers to King Wen, the founder of the dynasty of Chow, who was then, however, serving merely as the "Lord of the West" under the sovereign of Yin. We shall attempt to give the story as literal a translation as possible.

"The Lord of the West quietly pursued his course of virtue. To him many princes came to arbitrate their differences. It happened that there was between the peoples of Yü and of Ray a dispute which they could not settle. So to Chow they came. After crossing its boundary, they saw that every peasant was courteous and helpful and every man respected his elders according to the established custom. The peoples of Yü and of Ray, without seeing the Lord of the West, became ashamed of themselves and said to each other: 'What we dispute about is what the people of Chow are ashamed of. Why

should we go any further? It will only bring us disgrace.' So they settled the matter amicably and went their way. When the princes of the empire heard of this, they said, 'Truly the Lord of the West is the appointed sovereign!'"[1]

It is, of course, natural that those who believe in such a happy method of "Peaceful Penetration," should not fasten their faith upon the utility of force. In no instance in "The Book of History" do we find any doctrine advocating a military or aggressive policy. On the contrary, the ancient Chinese seem only to tolerate the use of force when it is absolutely indispensable. Thus does King Tang overthrow the dynasty of Hsia, and thus does King Wu overthrow the dynasty of Yin. And in both cases, although their opponents had given them enough reason and excuse to complain, they still declared that they had not done it on their own account, but because Heaven had charged them with the decree and because the people had suffered more than enough the former's oppression. There are some strange instances which appear to illustrate this point,[2] and of which we shall also give one typical example.

"King Wen heard that the people of Ch'ung did not practice virtue, and so set out to punish them. But for thirty days he besieged Ch'ung without gaining their submission. He drew back, spread further his virtuous teachings, and set out again to punish them. No sooner had he encamped than they submitted."[3]

[1] "The Records of History"—"The Records of Chow."
[2] See Lui's "Springs and Autumns," Bk. I, Sec. 3; and Bk. 19, Sec. 3.
[3] "The Chronicles of Cho," "Nineteen Years of Duke Hsi."

The moral of the story is self-evident and needs no further explanation. It is true that the authenticity of such happenings has often been doubted. But their significance will be none the less remarkable, even if they be nothing more than legends. An impartial reader should bear in mind that to such there is almost no parallel even in the fables of other nations, not to speak of their histories. And highly important it is also for our readers to note these, uncertain though they may be; for they shall soon be seen to have made a deep impression upon all the Chinese political theories that are to follow.

Thus we have completed the survey of the general political conceptions of this earliest period of Chinese history. We have shown that its dominant thoughts are two: the theory of divine law and the doctrine of exemplary kingship. Heaven creates all and rules all. It makes people of such a nature that they require a sovereign; and so it gives them a sovereign to serve as His vicegerent on this earth. But Heaven blesses only the good and resents the evil. So He continues or withdraws the great appointment in accordance with the personal practices of the individual who happens to occupy the great place. All these are the sequels of the first theory. On the other hand, as Heaven makes the sovereign solely for the benefit of the people, so it is the duty of the sovereign to devote his whole life to the welfare of his subjects, the physical as well as

the spiritual. Again, as it is supposed that only the most meritorious of men deserves the favoring appointment of Heaven, it behooves him who fills it to direct the people in the right course through his own personal example. Consequently, he must ever seek the able and virtuous to be his assistants; and through virtue alone must he always try to extend his beneficial influences, like the light of a beacon, into darker and more remote regions. These are the sequels of the second theory. In a sense, therefore, the second is a derivation of the first. In another, they mutually supplement each other; and without one the other will not be complete. Truly, it is even as we have quoted elsewhere: "The Son of Heaven is the parent of the people, and so becomes the sovereign of the empire."

We have now accomplished our task. We have linked random statements together into a presentable system of philosophy; and we have endeavored to cover within these few pages the political thoughts of sixteen centuries. It may truly be said of us that we have made possible the impossible. But, strange as it seems, our triumph is not at all complete. Like King Tang of Shang, while secretly marveling at what we have done ourselves we cannot but feel a certain sense of shame on account of our own conduct. Under such circumstances, therefore, to conclude with a eulogy of our ancients would be merely a folly; and to end with a criticism would be simply

a crime. And we deem it only wise to follow the example of Bunyan and let this chapter of ours, like his characters in "The Pilgrim's Progress," continue on its way and be heard of no more.

CHAPTER II

"THE CONSTITUTION OF CHOW"

THERE is reason to believe that we should have included the following discussion in the previous chapter. There is, perhaps, still more reason to assert that we should not include it anywhere at all in this volume.

"The Constitution of Chow" is far less reliable than "The Book of History." It is supposed to have been formulated by a brother of King Wu, the famous duke of Chow, through whose hands the epoch-making success of his short-lived brother was made lasting, and the dynasty of Chow given a firm foundation. Accordingly, the book (for a book it is) must have been written somewhere around 1100 B.C. But this asseveration has been seriously contested. "The Constitution of Chow" was one of the last tomes that "reappeared" after the famous episode of the burning of books, and ever since its reappearance its authenticity has been a perpetual bone of contention among native scholars of China.

Between extreme views, we are of the group that holds the doctrine of the Golden Mean. While we believe that the book may not be an authentic document of the duke of Chow, we think also that it cannot possibly be entirely a fabrication. There is at least a part of it that

must have been a true account of the government practice of the dynasty of Chow in its early years.[1] Moreover, the book as a whole, when viewed theoretically, well accords with the earliest political conceptions of China, such as we have previously outlined. If it is a counterfeit, therefore, it at least is one which bears so much resemblance to the genuine that we may pass it for current coin, without exactly making ourselves a by-word for undiscerning stupidity. Thus we deem it worth while to undertake this risk and to supplement our previous chapter with the following discussion.

Before we analyze its underlying political theories, a word about the general organization of the state under the dynasty of Chow may be appropriate. By this time feudalism has already become the recognized form of government. It is recorded that "King Wu, after having conquered Yin, awarded fiefs to his various vassals."[2] The latter, as all Chinese ancient writings indicate, were divided into five classes. But as to their respective size and number, among the diverse records there is no agreement. We shall give here, however, an instance from "The Constitution of Chow," not because we deem it more reliable than others, but because it seems more in keeping with the general atmosphere of this chapter.

[1] See C. C. Liang, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
[2] "The Records of History"—"The Records of Chow."

"The royal domain is a thousand square li. [Each li is about one third of a square mile.] A *kung* [duke] is given five hundred square li; altogether there are four *kung*. A *ho* [earl] is given four hundred square li; altogether there are six *ho*. A *peh* [count] is given three hundred square li: altogether there are seven *peh*. A *chih* [viscount] is given two hundred square li; altogether there are twenty-five *chih*. A *nan* [baron] is given a hundred square li; altogether there are a hundred *nan*." [1]

The cause of the establishment of feudalism was undoubtedly found in the gradual evolution of the ancient system of clans and the desire of the emperors to secure their thrones by faithful supporters. There are evidences that the dynasty of Chow did not overthrow all the vassal states which had rendered homage to the dynasty of Yin, but only established in their midst some seventy new ones of whom seven or eight tenths were given to princes of royal blood. [2] The principle may be seen in "The Book of Poetry," where it is written that

> "Great vassal states are screens,
> Great families are buttresses." [3]

But what "The Constitution of Chow" is concerned with most is not the organization of the empire as a whole, but that of the royal domain itself. In that it is most interesting and instructive. The title of the volume, when literally translated, should be "The Officers of Chow." And perhaps that is really a better translation, for the book is, in fact, too detailed for an

[1] Bk. III.
[2] "Hsuentze," Chap. 8.
[3] Pt. III, Bk. II, Ode 10.

ordinary constitution. It is rather a complete directory of all the persons in the service of the emperor, beginning with his prime minister and going on down to his household menials, with a minute description of their various duties. But none the less, now and then appear passages in which the functions of a minister are mingled with brilliant generalizations and theories of great import. For instance, when it tries to define the powers of the prime minister, it makes the following statements:

"Eight things he holds to help the king handle his numerous officers: The first is rank that controls their distinction. The second is emolument that controls their wealth. The third is favor that controls their fortune. The fourth is appointment that controls their conduct. The fifth is attention that controls their blessing. The sixth is confiscation that controls their poverty. The seventh is removal that controls their failings. The eighth is death that controls their excessiveness."[1]

"Eight regulations he holds to govern the different departments of government. The first pertains to their organization so that the government of the state may be established. The second pertains to their functions so that the government of the state may be clarified. The third pertains to their relationships so that the government of the state may be coöperative. The fourth pertains to their procedure so that the government of the state may be efficient. The fifth pertains to their formalities so that the government of the state may appear permanent. The sixth pertains to their control so that the government of the state may be complete. The seventh pertains to their punishment so that the government of the state may be corrected. The eighth pertains to their reckoning so that the government of the state may be audited."[2]

[1] Bk. I.
[2] *Ibid.*

"Eight methods he holds to govern the country. The first is ritual and worship, so as to control its spirit. The second is statutes and regulations, so as to control its great officers. The third is removal and appointment, so as to control its petty officers. The fourth is emolument and rank, so as to control its scholars. The fifth is taxes and tributes, so as to control its resources. The sixth is ceremonies and customs, so as to control its people. The seventh is punishment and reward, so as to control its strength. The eighth is farming and other employments, so as to control its multitude."[1]

From these few examples our reader may, perhaps, gather an impression of the type of work of the so-called "Constitution of Chow."

But we are not here to examine into the governmental system of Chow nor to depict the diverse functions of its numerous officers. We are to penetrate beyond all these in an attempt to seek the very reasons for its being—in other words, its underlying political theories. In this endeavor, it cannot be said to be unexpected that we find them in close agreement with the trend of thought that we have outlined in our first chapter. It is stated as a preamble to "The Constitution" and repeated several times in the book that "the king establishes the state, distinguishing the directions and erecting the ranks, dividing the country and distributing the land, instituting offices and allocating duties, in order to be the pole of the people." And to the word "pole" a Chinese commentator has given this exposition: "Pole is center. That is, to give all the people under

[1] *Ibid.*

Heaven a center to attach themselves to, so that they may find settlement."[1] This is, of course, a product of the theory of exemplary kingship.

Then, as the second underlying principle of "The Constitution of Chow," we have the doctrine of popular welfare, which we have already shown in the previous chapter to be a derivation of the early concepts of the divine law. The significance of this doctrine to the organization of Chow is manifest throughout the book; but in no other place is it more clearly and summarily shown than in its definition of the six canons which are held in their entirety by the prime minister to help the king govern the state, and which are also separately assigned to the special care of six ministers.

> "The first is the Canon of Government, for the purpose of organizing the state, governing the different departments, and regulating the people. The second is the Canon of Education, for the purpose of stabilizing the state, training the different departments, and cultivating the people. The third is the Canon of Ceremonies, for the purpose of making the state coherent, the hundreds of officers coöperative, and the people harmonious. The fourth is the Canon of Administration, for the purpose of guarding the tranquility of the state, the probity of the hundreds of officers, and the equality of the people. The fifth is the Canon of Punishment, for the purpose of restricting the state, punishing the hundreds of officers, and correcting the people. The sixth is the Canon of Industry, for the purpose of enriching the state, employing the hundreds of officers, and exercising the people."[2]

1 "Comments by Cheng Kang-ch'eng."
2 "The Constitution of Chow," Bk. I.

Thus we have the different functions of the chief ministers; and all the functions are created for one ultimate purpose — the security of the welfare of the people.

From these two basic theories the dynasty of Chow constructed its governmental system. Out of the doctrine of exemplary kingship two corollaries naturally emerge. The first relates to the king himself. He must first cultivate his own person before attempting to rule. We have seen in our last chapter that no advice was begrudged to kings about their necessary duties and virtues. We are now to see that no attention was spared to insure the good breeding of royal heirs so that they might not fail their destiny, once occupying the great place. In "The Constitution of Chow" there are many provisions in which the education of the princes are emphasized and special officers are assigned to that function. We shall just mention a few to illustrate the pedagogic policy which they are ordered to pursue.

"Three virtues shall be taught to the royal heir. The first is the virtue of moderation, so that he may learn the fundamental principle of how to live. The second is the virtue of adaptability, so that he may learn the fundamental principle of how to conduct himself. The third is the virtue of filial duty, so that he may learn what is in accordance with nature and what is in contradiction to it. He shall also be taught the three proper modes of conduct. The first is filial conduct, to render love to his parents. The second is friendly conduct, to pay respect to the virtuous and talented. The third is obedient conduct, to serve his teachers and elders."[1]

[1] Bk. II.

Again,

> "The chief music teacher shall make the royal heir learn the virtues of music: moderation, harmony, reverence, constancy, love, and benevolence." [1]

These excerpts will recall to students of political science certain passages of Plato in which are revealed his views on the proper method of educating the so-called philosophers of the Republic. The aim of both is the same — to raise the ruler to as high a level as possible, so that he may rule over the state by right of sheer excellence. The only difference between the two seems to be that while the latter remained but an unfulfilled ideal in the sphere of the imagination, the former was actually put into practice.

As a second corollary to the theory of exemplary kingship, "The Constitution of Chow" lays special emphasis upon the necessity for and methods of securing officers of quality on the part of the ruler. It was undoubtedly with this in his mind that an early king of that dynasty in the "Book of History" says: "Intelligent kings, in establishing their governments, care not so much about the offices as about the men." [2] And from "The Constitution" we learn that

> "Rank shall be regulated in accordance with virtue; emolument in accordance with merit. The management of affairs shall be given to those who are able; and pensions to those who are long in service." [3]

[1] Bk. III.
[2] "The Organization of Chow."
[3] Bk. I.

As for the execution of this policy, two methods are set down. The first is the contrivance of a winnowing process in order to sift the chaff from the grain among the multitudinous servants of the kingdom. Thus "The Constitution" provides that

> "In every three years there shall be a reckoning of the works of the numerous officers, and punishments and rewards shall be alloted them thereby:"[1]

Six standards shall be used in these reckonings, namely: "First, whether or not they are genuinely good; second, whether or not they are genuinely able; third, whether or not they are genuinely dutiful; fourth, whether or not they are genuinely upright; fifth, whether or not they are genuinely observant of the law; and sixth, whether or not they are genuinely discerning."[2]

Nor is that all. The rulers of Chow are conscious that while painstaking winnowing may be going on in the mill, better grain may have been left ungathered in the field. This defect must, therefore, be remedied; and another opening for promoting the meritorious is devised. We read from "The Constitution":

> "Let the people elect the virtuous, and make these lead them. Let the people elect the able, and make these manage their affairs."[3]

A commentator of the second century of this era gives this passage the following explanation:

[1] Bk. I.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Bk. II.

> "Let the people themselves elect some virtuous men; and raise them accordingly to be leaders of the people, so that they may teach them virtuous conduct and proper living. Let the people themselves elect some able men; and employ them accordingly, so that they may manage for the people the taxes and services they are required to pay and render."[1]

In short, the people are given power to choose their own immediate officers on the basis of virtue and talent; and these officers, in turn, have further chances to be promoted under the system of reckoning. From these, we can see how carefully and comprehensively the rulers of Chow have provided for the securing of worthy ministers and how much emphasis they have laid on the doctrine of government by man.

Now we come to the second fundamental pillar of "The Constitution of Chow"—the doctrine of popular welfare. This seems to have also two possible ramifications. The first pertains to theory; the second deals with practice. The first, since there is no exact Western expression for it, we shall designate as the "principle of great family." But as to the second, we are more fortunate in having a modern term which we can borrow for our purpose—"state socialism."

The principle of great family means exactly what the words signify. To the ancients, probably because the family system has been embedded so deeply in their development, the concept of state is nothing but an enlarged family, with

[1] "Comments by Cheng K'ang-ch'en."

Heaven as the common father, with the sovereign as the "eldest of His sons," and with the rest as the younger children. This can be easily evidenced by the thoroughly paternalistic policy of "The Constitution." The ruler as the vicegerent of God on earth is required to play the part of a father to the multitude. Because the people are no less than his brothers, he must be benevolent to them. Because every one in the kingdom is constantly looking up to him as an example, he himself must attempt to attain excellence. He reveres the virtuous and the talented just as a father pays due respect to his grown-up children. He takes care of the destitute and the unfortunate just as the parents comfort their wretched sons in pain. In short, he is the head of the family — a most important part of the family; but still no more than a part. He must cherish the harmony of the family and plan for its welfare. He is happy only when all are happy; and he must sorrow whenever others sorrow.

This current of thought flows through the whole governmental system of Chow, and becomes evident to anyone who can read the book in its original language. But, like an undercurrent, it is somewhat difficult to find a clear, definite expression of it on the surface. And we are forced to resort to the following for circumstantial evidence.

> "Six ways shall be used to nourish the people. The first is by loving the young. The second is by nourishing the old. The third is by cheering the desperate. The fourth is by commiserating the poor. The fifth is by comforting the afflicted. The sixth is by giving contentment to the rich."[1]

This illustrates well the paternal regard entertained by the sovereign towards his people. The following perhaps does even better. It is the custom of the period that the king be given some time each day to enjoy the soothing strains of music. But, as "The Constitution" provides,

> "In case of great mourning there shall be no music. In case of great famine there shall be no music. In case of calamities either in Heaven or on Earth there shall be no music. In case of inflicting capital punishment, there shall be no music."[2]

Truly in no other spirit can this be written but that of a father of a family, who considers his children's happiness dearer than his own and who gives stern censure only when absolutely necessary and while dropping a tear.

With the whole state as a great family and the sovereign as an all-loving father, it is natural therefore that one of his heartiest wishes is to see his children mutually helpful and affectionate to one another. Thus he would like to see them speak the same tongue, share the same interests, enjoy the same kind of amusements, and possibly wear the same kind of habiliments so that they may discard individual selfishness and learn to be

[1] Bk. II.
[2] Bk. I.

devoted to each other. And this is exactly what the founders of Chow attempted to do to their people. They wanted to cultivate in the multitude a sense of community of interest and a spirit of affectionate coöperation. Thus a special officer is appointed "to control and build roads in the kingdom, to make possible the exchange of wealth among its different parts, to universalize its utensils and instruments, to standardize its measurements, and to cultivate common desires and inclinations."[1] Also,

> "Six fundamental customs shall be fostered to tranquilize the people: The first is housing a whole family in one dwelling. The second is attaching families of the same descent to their ancestral burial ground. The third is coöperation among relations by marriage. The fourth is association among teachers and scholars. The fifth is association among friends. The sixth is the standardizing of clothes."[2]

Then,

> "Let five families form a *pi* [neighborhood], and make them watch for each other. Let five *pi* form a *lu* [ward], and make them entertain each other. Let five *lu* form a *ch'o* [tribe], and make them bury their dead for each other. Let five *ch'o* form a *tang* [section], and make them help each other in case of need. Let five *tang* form a *chou* [district], and make them commiserate each other in case of calamity. Let five *chou* form a *hsiang* [region], and make them friendly to each other."[3]

One purpose, therefore, transcends all these doings —to impress upon the people the idea of state as

[1] Bk. IV.
[2] Bk. II.
[3] *Id.*

nothing but a great family, and to promote among them a spirit of mutual helpfulness.

With such paternalism, it cannot be hard for state socialism to keep pace. For, of one parent are they truly born; and wherever one is, the other generally stalks behind. And in "The Constitution of Chow" we do not find an exception to the rule. We have already given above an excerpt pertaining to the taking care of the destitute and the unfortunate. Now, we shall give another passage dealing with the employment of the people:

> "With nine functions shall the multitudinous people be employed. The first is that of farmers, who produce the nine kinds of grain. The second is that of horticulturists, who cultivate herbs and plants. The third is that of woodsmen and their like who gather the resources of mountains and waters. The fourth is that of shepherds and their like, who feed and breed fowls and animals. The fifth is that of the hundreds of craftsmen, who embellish and transform the raw materials. The sixth is that of merchants, who make possible the exchange of different forms of wealth. The seventh is that of matrons and wives, who transform and make silk and cloth. The eighth is that of convicted men and women, who are forced to perform odd tasks. The ninth is that of unemployed people, who have no regular appointments, but are moved about to serve here and there."[1]

Such arrangements almost savor a little too much of state communism. And this impression is further strengthened by a system of allocating land to the farmers, as follows:

> "Then divide equally the land and make a census of the people so that both numbers are known. To each lot of

[1] Bk. 1.

> the first-class land shall be assigned a family of seven, of whom three persons shall be serviceable. [According to an annotation, of the seven one is the head of the family. The rest is composed of half adults and half children. So there are only three serviceable persons.] To each lot of the middle-class land shall be assigned a family of six. When two families of such are combined together, there shall be five persons who shall be able to work. To each lot of the third class of land shall be assigned a family of five, of whom two shall be able to work."[1]

From this and other sources, both in "The Constitution of Chow" and in other ancient writings,[2] a belief has spread among the native scholars of China that at one time or another state communism had actually been practiced by their forefathers. The system by which the land is supposed to have been divided is called "The Well-Land System," because the shape of the land after its division bears a close resemblance to the Chinese character "well." Hence, "The Constitution of Chow" says in one place:

> "Then survey the country and divide the land into wells; nine husbandmen occupying a well."[3]

And Mencius, speaking about this system, explains in his works:

> "A square li forms a well, having altogether nine hundred acres. In the center of the well is the public land; the rest is occupied by eight families, a hundred acres for each. The public land is cultivated by all of them. Only

[1] Bk. II.
[2] See Mencius, Bk. III, Pt. I.
[3] Bk. II.

after the public duty has been fulfilled, do they dare to cultivate their own."[1]

In general, the actual practice of such a communistic scheme has been acknowledged. But, imbued with an intense skepticism that is characterizing the present age in their country, many native scholars have ventured of late to doubt.[2] Nor have they done so without reason. There has never been a clear, definite account of the system and its practice in any of our truly reliable ancient records; and whatever accounts we have, there is an abundance of contradictions among them, such as can be found even in the two quotations which we have just given above. But whether or not the system had been actually carried into execution, it seems to be reasonably certain that, speaking both from the standpoint of the trend of history and from that of political philosophy, a practice of state socialism or even state communism, as such, in the early days of the dynasty of Chow, was not entirely impossible. The population was then sparse; and doubtless there was more than sufficient land for an equal division among all. Besides, the country was supposed to belong totally to the sovereign, for have we not quoted in our first chapter one of the poets' sayings, "Under Heaven, all is the king's land?" And then we must remember that the kings in this

[1] Bk. III, Pt. 1, Chap. 3.
[2] See C. C. Liang's book, p. 87.

particular period did consider themselves as nothing but heads of a great family and were entirely solicitous of the welfare of their people as a whole.

But we do not need this bone of contention to support our proposition. Other evidences there are to prove the existence of a socialistic policy under the rule of Chow. It is said in the Constitution:

> "The go-between (a dignified official) shall control the relations between the sexes of the multitude. All men and women who have come of age are required to register with him the dates of their births and their names. It shall be ordered that men shall marry at thirty and women shall be married at twenty, and that with him all registrations of marriage and birth shall be entered. In the month of the middle of spring men and women shall be allowed to associate with each other. At that time, those who wish to marry, none may restrict. And it shall be the duty of the go-between to introduce to one another the men who have no wives and the women who have no husbands." [1]

We have already quoted, in addition, a provision of "The Constitution" which attempts to standardize the habiliments of the people. The latter seems also to be sustained by "The Book of Poetry" in which a poet is found at one place to be mourning over the diversity of apparel of his time, exceeding, as it does, the customs and regulations of the former kings.[2] Such close supervision of popular conduct as the foregoing cannot but prove at once both the socialistic

[1] Bk. II.
[2] Pt. II, Bk. VIII, Ode 1.

point of view and the extremely paternalistic policy of the dynasty of Chow.

Thus far we have seen how the basic theories — the principle of exemplary kingship and the doctrine of popular welfare — have each separately influenced "The Constitution of Chow." We are now to see what effects their influences, when combined, have wrought both on its educational policies and on its theories of punishment. As it is the duty of the king to convert his subjects to virtue, and as it is to the interests of the family to give good breeding to its children, the early kings of Chow realize keenly the importance of educating their people. The minister of education is given the highest rank in its officialdom, second only to the prime minister. And an elaborate system of schools is established in the realm so that the people may be taught the laws of the state as well as the proper way of living.[1] The teaching of the former we shall discuss later in connection with punishment. At present, however, we wish to devote to the latter our entire attention.

To the ancients of China, the proper way of living seems to consist of two canons: Moderation and Harmony. The first is the golden rule for living one's own life; the second is regarded as the "open sesame" to living with others. Indeed, the whole policy of the educational system of Chow seems to point to the cultivation

[1] See Bk. II.

of these two ideals in the minds of its people. And well does it accord with its basic theories, too. For the unselfishness of the sovereign, which is the ideal of the times, comes near to moderation. And the principle of the state as a great family naturally suggests the requirement of harmony for domestic happiness. Hence, in one place "The Constitution of Chow" prescribes that an officer be assigned the duty of "getting rid of excessive, idle, unnatural, and immoderate persons.[1] And in another it is provided that

> "three things shall be taught to the multitude, and those who display aptitude in learning them shall be treated as guests of the state and recommended to the king. The first of the three things embraces the six virtues: wisdom, benevolence, saintliness, justice, honesty, and coöperation. The second embraces the six proper modes of conduct: filial devotion to parents, affection for brothers, love of wife, obedience to husband, trustfulness of friends, compassion for inferiors.[2] The third embraces the six arts: li, music, archery, charioteering, history, and augury."

They are so taught, in short, that they may be moderate in their desires and harmonious in their pursuits in life.

No contrivance is ignored that may impress these ideas upon the people. Thus "The Constitution" prescribes:

> "Ceremonies [li] should be used to prevent the people from sinking into falsehood and to teach moderation.

[1] Bk. I.
[2] Bk. II.

> Music should be used to prevent the people from indulging their desires and to teach them harmony." [1]

Later on, speaking of music again, the book says that it is made in order to "give the state harmony, the people concord, the guests of the state joy, and strangers comfort." [2] As for ceremonies, they occupy a very important place in the educational system. Strictly speaking, the term "ceremonies" is a most derogatory translation of the Chinese word "*li*." It is on account of the inability of the English language to render a clear, exact meaning of the word that much misunderstanding and some abuse have been heaped upon the Chinese characteristic of laying too much emphasis upon what the Occidentals regard as "ceremonies" and "etiquette." But of this we shall speak later when we come to discuss the political theories of Confucius. At present, it suffices to say that the government of Chow endeavors to stamp the idea of moderation and harmony upon the people with impressive ceremonies which are so contrived as to be conducive to the desired effect. Hence, the Minister of Education is given, for instance, the function of

> "cultivating harmony among the multitude with the *li* of festivity, cultivating harmony among brothers and kindred with the *li* of drinking and eating, and cultivating harmony among men and women with the *li* of marriage, etc. etc." [3]

[1] Bk. II.
[2] Bk. III.
[3] Ibid.

But aside from *li* and music, other things are also employed for the same purpose. Thus it is provided that

"twelve teachings shall be distributed: The first is to teach reverence with the *li* of worship that the people may not be frail. The second is to teach courtesy with the *li* of gentlemen, that the people may not be querulous. The third is to teach affectionateness with the *li* of relationship between men and women, that the people may not be resentful. The fourth is to teach harmony with music, that the people may not be discordant. The fifth is to teach the difference of rank with etiquette, that the people may not be excessive. The sixth is to teach tranquillity with customs, that the people may not be restless. The seventh is to teach uprightness with punishment, that the people may not be impulsive. The eighth is to teach helpfulness with oaths to the effect that the people will not be slothful. The ninth is to teach moderation with calculation, that the people may know when to be content. The tenth is to cutiivate ability in the management of affairs, that the people may not fail in their duties. The eleventh is to regulate rank according to merit, that the people may not become envious of virtue. The twelfth is to regulate emolument according to service, that the people may be induced to be useful."[1]

In short, everything in the state—from the organization of its government down to the daily routine of its subjects—is so employed and directed as to mold the people into this one ideal—an efficient, moderate, and harmonious society.

To attain that aim, of course, punishment must be utilized to curtail where education fails to convert. And thus we find, in "The Constitution," a complete, rational theory of punishment.

[1] Bk. II.

It seems to be sprung chiefly from two propositions: First, as all men are born good,[1] whoever goes astray should be given a chance to regenerate himself. Second, it is thought that only through the failings of a sovereign the people may come to wrong. The king cannot, therefore, without a sore conscience, inflict any chastisement except in accordance with law and for preventive purposes. Thus it is recorded in "The Book of History" as the advice of a king of Chow to his brother, Fung, upon whom he has just bestowed an earldom:

> "It is not you, Fung, who inflict a severe punishment or death upon a man; you may not of yourself so punish a man or put him to death. . . . It is not you, Fung, who cut off a man's nose or ears; you may not of yourself cut off a man's nose or ears. . . .
>
> "In setting forth the business of justice, punishments will be determined by the regular laws of Yin. But you must see that those punishments, as well as the penalty of death, be righteous. And O Fung, you must not let them be warped to agree with your inclinations. Then shall you be entirely accordant with right, and may say, 'These are properly ordered.' Yet even then you must say at the same time, 'May they after all not be entirely accordant with right?'"[2]

Also, we have the words of a minister of Chow: "Only those who are disobedient to your government and who are uninfluenced by your instructions, you may punish. For the end of punishment is to make an end of punishing."[3]

[1] See the previous chapter.
[2] "The Announcement of K'ang."
[3] "Chuen Ch'en," "The Book of History."

Nor is prevention the only end of punishment. The rulers of Chow seem to have for it a still higher purpose; that is, apart from employing punishment as a means to make the people avoid doing wrong, they entertain an idea of wielding it as a spur to urge the people on to doing right. This may be illustrated by the laws of Chow. "The Constitution" provides that the minister of justice should

"induce the people with the five laws of punishment. The first deals with agricultural punishments, which purpose to exalt achievement and induce effort. The second deals with military punishments, which purpose to exalt command and induce obedience. The third deals with social punishments, which purpose to exalt virtue and induce filiality. The fourth deals with administrative punishments, which purpose to exalt talent and induce dutifulness. The fifth deals with national punishments which purpose to exalt truthfulness and induce reverence."[1]

As such are the ends of punishment, the first requisite for its success is naturally to make clear the laws, and to unfold to the people what they encourage and what they disallow, so that the people may know exactly what to pursue with diligence and what to avoid with care. Hence, as we have already mentioned above, this falls upon the office of the minister of education as one of its most important duties. "The Constitution" provides that:

"The multitude be taught with the eight social laws of punishment. First, the punishment of the unfilial. Second, the punishment of the inharmonious among kindred. Third,

[1] Bk. V.

> the punishment of the discordant among relations by marriage. Fourth, the punishment of those who are unbrotherly. Fifth, the punishment of those who are untruthful with friends. Sixth, the punishment of those who are not compassionate towards their inferiors. Seventh, the punishment of those who excite the people with ill words. Eighth, the punishment of those who confuse the people with unnatural innovations." [1]

In addition, it is provided that on the first day of the first month of every year the prime minister shall have the plans and laws of the government posted in all urban areas and rural regions. These shall be hung at convenient places so that the multitude may all perceive them; and they shall not be taken down until ten days thereafter.[2] Provisions are also made for the proclamation of other regulations. One example will be sufficient here. To the chief assistant of the prime minister is given the duty of acquainting all the officers of the various departments with the laws of the government at the beginning of every year. While he causes an alarum to be rung continuously, it is required of him to announce that "for those who do not obey the law, the state has its regular punishments." [3]

The second fundamental principle that characterizes the theory of punishment, as we have already intimated, is that every criminal should be given a chance of regeneration. In certain petty cases, it appears that the wrongdoer is first

[1] Bk. II.
[2] Bk. I.
[3] *Ibid.*

brought to his teacher under the charge of the department of education for correction. Thus says "The Constitution":

> "Punishment should be inflicted upon him who committed misbehavior only after he has been pardoned three times. After having been thrice punished, he. . . shall be sent to the minister of justice to be given hard labor." [1]

Between his inceptive misconduct and the final clutch of the law the wrongdoer is, therefore, given many a chance of escape. This principle "The Constitution" also holds for more serious crimes. Thus "The Constitution" prescribes in relation to the duties of the minister of justice:

> "As for those who have done injury to others, they shall not be allowed to wear hats or decorations, and on their backs shall be written their crimes. They shall be given hard labor, and shall also be collected together to be taught. Those who can reform themselves shall be released after three years in case of having committed the first class of crime; after two years in case of the second class; after one year in case of the third. Those who cannot reform themselves and have escaped from the prison shall be put to death." [2]

From this it is plain that regeneration was the guiding principle for the theory of punishment at that time.

Two other points may also perhaps be worth mentioning at this juncture. The principle of individualizing punishment is one. The quotation above has already shown in a way its application to individual criminals. There is one more

[1] Bk. II.
[2] Bk. V.

provision in the constitution, which leads us to think that the rulers of Chow have given this principle a still wider extension. It says—

> "The duty of the minister of justice shall be to control the three sets of penal laws of the state. First, in case of inflicting punishments in a newly settled region the light set of penal laws shall be used. Second, in case of inflicting punishments in a normal region, the moderate set of penal laws shall be used. Third, in case of inflicting punishments in a chaotic region, the heavy set of penal laws shall be used."[1]

As for the other point, it is an effort to insure speedy justice and to prevent oppressive corruption. We find in "The Constitution" this provision:

> "The Red Stone in the public place shall be used as a vent for the maltreated people to express their sentiments. All those, far and near, destitute and helpless, old and young, who have resorted to their officers for justice and have been suppressed by them, may stand on the stone for three days. Then the people shall listen to their sayings and report them to their superiors so that those officers concerned may be punished."[2]

From these excerpts it certainly appears that no theory of punishment can be more comprehensive and rational and no government can be more solicitous of justice for its people.

Our analysis of "The Constitution of Chow" is concluded. We have discovered that its foundation is laid on the principle of exemplary kingship and the doctrine of popular welfare. We have seen that out of the first emerges, on the one hand,

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*

the obligation of the sovereign to cultivate his own personality, and, on the other, the necessity that the government secure able and virtuous men; and that out of the second grows the idea of the state as a great family, which gives, thus, to the political scheme of Chow, a paternalistic and socialistic hue. To the two principles combined, we have learned, its entire educational and punitive policies owe their birth. And all of these, we have also come to understand, lead to one ultimate goal: to chisel the whole nation into this one ideal image—an efficient, happy, moderate, and harmonious group.

It is of no use to praise the system here. For its ideal may not be acceptable to all. It is of no use to criticize it here, for its veracity is open to doubt. It is even of no use to compare it with our modern society, for circumstances have been changed, and simple living has long been lost to men. But, perhaps it is of some use to say just one word in this place: If such be, in truth, the ancient scheme of a people (which many of them believe it to be), does it not afford them a slight excuse to hark ever back to the good old years of their forefathers?

CHAPTER III

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

THE preceding chapters have brought us down to the eighth century before Christ. Between the eighth and the sixth century we have a transitional period, during which the imperial sway of Chow starts on its road of decline and the foundations of feudalism begin to show signs of decay. Besides these phenomena, however, this period offers us no other interest; for, so far as the records go, it gives us neither many great men nor any significant thought. But after this static interval, a tremendous change is destined to come. For, in the next three hundred years (roughly speaking, between 530 and 230 B.C.), we are to witness one of the greatest ages of history,—the Golden Age of Chinese philosophy.

No great age of thought ever comes into existence by sheer accident. Like a wondrous plant, it must have many favorable forces in the soil to make its growth possible. To this rule the Golden Age of Chinese philosophy is no exception. So before we analyze its various theories and concepts, it is profitable for us to survey the social and political conditions of the times that have given them birth.

Unlike other golden ages, the times of this one were not an age of peace, but an age of both social

and political upheaval. Politically, we have witnessed the complete collapse of the imperial government and the irretrievable downfall of the feudalistic scheme. We see them move towards their destruction, at first with gradual speed then with increased velocity; and finally, in a mighty crash, plunge into absolute ruin and chaos. In the beginning, powerful dukes and ambitious earls still grasp the leadership of the lords and maintain some peace and order within the empire in the name of the emperor. Then comes the stage when no undisputed leader can be chosen, and all states fall upon each other like foul beasts. Of some seventy and more feudal states which King Wu had established, only seven emerge from the holocaust by the middle of the fourth century. But still a balance of power cannot be maintained, and peace is far from sight. In the next hundred years, it can almost be said that not a single year passes without the occurrence of a bloody war; and the deadliest struggle for supremacy would continue even longer did not the state of Chin finally succeed in subjugating all the rest and establishing a new empire by the year 232 B.C.

With the downfall of feudalism there was also the downfall of the ancient aristocracy. The change that occured in China then was exactly like that which was to occur some seventeen or eighteen centuries later in Europe. With the sprouting of independent states and with cutthroat

rivalry in their midst, concentration of force was found indispensable to national existence, and centralization of government was hailed as the common motto. So overboard went the ancient system of aristocracy, and on the ships of state stood lone pilots—the sovereigns themselves.

Nor is this period of Chinese history unlike the era of the dawn of social development in modern Europe. Urban life began to be popular, and cities of considerable size came into existence. It was said about the capital of one of the seven states that "its carriages were so many that they collided with one another's wheels, and its inhabitants were so numerous that they rubbed one another's shoulders."[1] Though this may not sound strange at all in the hustle of our modern life, it shows, none the less, that such a spectacle was unprecedented in the eyes of the people of that time.

With the growth of urban life came the development of trade. Although agriculture remained the most important occupation of the day, commercialism and industrialism began to thrust themselves upon society with more forwardness than they ever had before. There were instances of men who had acquired so much wealth through mining, or trading, as to rival the extravagance of crowned heads.[2] There was also a notorious case of a mere affluent merchant who succeeded,

1 "National Tablets"—"The Tablets of Ch'i."
2 "The Records of History"—"Biographies of Great Traders."

by means of intrigues, in disposing of an heir apparent and in clutching the dictatorial power of a kingdom.[1] Just how much influence the appearance of this new type of life might have exercised upon the politics and thought of the period, it is not possible for us to estimate accurately; but we cannot but deem it great, when we find that it attracted the attention of many well-known statesmen of the time.[2]

With the downfall of aristocracy and with the growth of trade, knowledge becomes naturally more widespread. It is no longer monopolized by the few, but is converted into a sort of common property. It is no longer the stereotyped government education as of old, but private schools commence to spring up. Confucius first sets an example in this respect at the very end of the sixth century before Christ. Micius is a close second to follow. By the middle of this lengthy period with which we are dealing, independent and private teaching becomes almost a fad as well as a tradition. Then, as a further stimulation to the spread of knowledge, they seem to have developed at the time a facile way of making transcripts either on silk or on bamboo tablets. Thus it is recorded that "When Micius journeyed south, he carried many a book with him,"[3] and "When Soo-Chien [a famous dialectician] opened

[1] "Records of History"—"Biography of Lu-Pu-Wei."
[2] See Chaps. 6 and 7.
[3] "The Works of Micius," Chap. 47.

his bookcase, there were scores of tablets inside."[1] So it was evident that transcription was no longer a difficult matter, and books or tablets must have become fairly current among the people.

Such are, then, some of the most important aspects of the social and political upheaval of the time. It is paralleled in subsequent history of the world, only by the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation in Europe. It is an age when all the old standards have been broken down, and when new ones have not yet been set up in their stead. There are a thousand and one problems to solve; and yet there is not a single faith that has escaped from the avalanche intact, and that can still hold the undivided confidence of the people. Changes come thick and fast. Revolutions follow close upon the heels of one another. Men's hearts are shocked. Men's minds are stimulated to think.

Then, in addition, there is another force, minor but none the less important, that provokes thought. Not the masses alone, but the rulers themselves are eager for a solution that can save the whole empire from dire chaos. They are in continuous anxiety over the safety of their persons and the existence of their states. They are in a willing mood to try any experiment that can make their positions secure and their countries powerful. So they are particularly desirous of knowledge, and

[1] "The Tablets of Nations"—"The Tablets of Ch'i."

offer great opportunities to those who are ambitious and able.

With the stimulation of environment on the one hand and with the inducement of the rulers on the other, either aiming at public welfare or seeking primarily selfish interests, like sprouts in springtime, a multitude of theories shoot forth. No idea is so fantastic but it has its representatives. No principle is so radical but it claims many followers. One advocates sheer communism as a solution for the situation of the day.[1] Another believes exactly the contrary and declares openly that he will spare "not a single hair to benefit the world."[2] Verily, it is a holiday for philosophies; and we find all kinds of them turning out into the open to vaunt themselves.

To describe all of these would be both extremely interesting and exceedingly instructive. But it would be too enormous a task for us to undertake at present. Moreover, when we analyze those systems of philosophy closely, we discover that only four of them stand out as the most prominent and influential. So to these four alone we should turn our attention in this work. And before we discuss them and their ramifications in detail in the later chapters, we deem it advantageous here to present them in brief summaries by way of introduction.

[1] See Mencius, Bk. III, Pt. I, Ch. 4.
[2] See "Liehtze," Ch. 7.

The four systems are, namely: Taoism, Legalism, Micianism, and Confucianism.

I. TAOISM. Taoism is the result of a direct reaction against the chaotic conditions of the times. Its chief desire is to end strife. Its fundamental aim is a return to the state of nature. Its slogan is, "Do nothing." Its key word is "simplicity." It may be said to be a type of philosophical anarchism. Its founder is Laotze (550 B.C.?); and its great advocate is Chwangtze (335?–275? B.C.)

II. LEGALISM. In sharp constrast with Taoism we have the system of the Legalists. They were practical men, most of whom participated at one time or another in the management of state affairs. They ridicule the idea of government by man. They believe that law is the only instrument which could regulate and unify the people. Their conception of the state is dynamic. Their shibboleth is either "efficiency" or "expediency." Their theory is more like Western political philosophy than the others. They are represented in this volume by Kwangtze (the date of the book attributed to him is about the third century before Christ), Shang Yang (?–338 B.C.), and Han Fei (?–223 B.C.)

III. MICIANISM. Taking a middle course between the philosophical anarchism of the Taoists and the Legalistic theory of government by law, there are two systems of political philosophy—Micianism and Confucianism. Micius, or Mo-Ti,

was the founder of Micianism. He flourished a little later than Confucius. He took over the latter's ideals and gave them a religious baptism. His whole theory is based upon his conception of a divine law. His principal teaching is the doctrine of universal love. His government may be said to be one by God through men.

IV. CONFUCIANISM. It is well known that Confucianism was founded by the most revered sage of China—Confucius (552–479 B.C.). His theories are ethical in nature. He believes that society, or the state, should be a product of the harmonious association of men; and that this harmonious association can only be obtained when the people are made "benevolent" and "righteous" by habit. So he contrives the so-called rules of propriety and endeavors by them to create an ethical atmosphere congenial to the development of "benevolence" and "righteousness" and hostile towards evil and violence. His aim is to lift the people up to the highest level of moral excellence. His government is government by man through ethics. Besides him, we also discuss here two of his disciples—Mencius (372?–289? B.C.) and Hsuantze (310?–230? B.C.).

These are, then, the four main trends of philosophy, which we shall discuss later in detail. From such a desultory survey as this, it may be seen that no period in history has given birth to such a brilliant galaxy of thinkers, so numerous

and yet so varied, as this one with which we are dealing. Indeed, it is not with any bias that we have labeled this the "Golden Age of Chinese Philosophy."

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF LAOTZE

THE life of the founder of Chinese mysticism is no less mystic than his philosophy. Apart from many legendary accounts forged out of the "thick-coming fancies" of his later disciples, we find in reliable ancient writings only a few cursory remarks pertaining to him. It is commonly acknowledged that he is the author of the "Tao Têh Ching" upon which the discussions of this chapter are based. It is also recorded that he had served in the government of Chow as a "keeper of magazines," and that Confucius, while still a comparatively young man, had studied under him at one time.[1] From the latter event, it has come to be believed that Laotze must have lived and flourished in the middle of the sixth century before Christ.

However scanty the records of his life may be, his influence stands in the field of Chinese philosophy second to none but that of Confucius. In the chronicles of China, he is the first thinker who has left behind him a definite system of thought. Whenever a history of Chinese philosophy is written, he is generally given precedence, by right of sheer seniority, over all other philosophers. In addition, his system, extreme and eccentric as sometimes it may seem, has in it a

[1] "The Records of History," "Biographies of Laotze and Confucius."

remarkable originality and some invaluable truths, which never fail to charm whoever lends an ear, and which have succeeded in forming in the stratum of Chinese civilization, a deep bed, not so manifest, perhaps, as that of Confucianism, but none the less real and significant.

To understand the political theories of Laotze, one must be prepared to examine some of the fundamental principles in his mystical philosophy. The key to the latter is found in the word "Tao." Unfortunately it is a word that furnishes a surpassing example of the limitations of the art which attempts to render the abstract terms of one language into another. But if a translation is insisted upon, we may give as suggestions, "principle" or "way." To Laotze, the "Way" is the thing that governs every happening in the universe and is the *raison d'être* of every being. Thus he says:

> "There is a thing made of the unknown, born before Heaven and Earth, aloof, solitary, alone, unchangeable, all-embracing and everlasting, capable of being mother of the whole world. I do not know its name. I call it 'The Way.'"[1]

At first glance, this passage may lead us to believe that the "Way" of Laotze is not greatly different from Heaven and its divine law, such as we revealed in our first chapter. But this is not so. While Heaven is a personal deity, the "Way" is an abstract idea. In the theory of Laotze, it is

[1] Chap. 25.

greater even than Heaven itself. It is born before God and controls His doings. It is somewhat like "Fate" in Greek mythology—"Fate" whose ordinance stands even above the will of the father of gods. Perhaps it resembles much more closely the concept of "Reason" in the natural-law theories of the eighteenth century (whose *pet doctrine* was that God is under the glorious necessity of not contradicting Himself).

But neither the concept of "Fate" nor that of "Reason" can approach the delicate and abstruse meaning of the "Way." Laotze himself realizes that it is perhaps a little too obscure to understand, and tries to explain it by means of the word "nothingness." Before there was anything in the universe, there must have been nothing. "Nothingness" is therefore the origin of the world.[1] After there was a world, "Nothingness," Laotze holds, was still the guiding principle for the governance of everything. One makes an earthenware vessel and drinks from it. It is not its brim that contains the water, but the empty space within the brim—or, in other words, its "nothingness." One builds a house and lives in it. It is not in the walls that one lives, but again in the empty space within the walls—or again, its "nothingness."[2] In short, to be nothing—that is the only way to be useful. To be able to be nothing—that is the Way.

[1] Chap. I.
[2] Chap. II.

With this in mind, the reader may perhaps be ready for the understanding of the following passage which attempts to disclose the workings of the "Way":

> "The Way is overwhelming. It goes left and right as it may choose. All things rely upon it for a livelihood; and from the task it does not shrink. It accomplishes all things, but asks for nothing in return. It is always desireless; hence it may be described as insignficant. Yet as all things attach themselves to it, though it does not attempt to rule them, it may be called "great." Because it never endeavors to make itself great, therefore it achieves greatness in the end."[1]

To explain, this intangible "Way," which unconsciously governs everything in the world, may be likened to air on the earth. It pervades everything, and yet it does not display itself. It appears to be nothing; and yet every animated being depends upon it for life. It may be described as insignificant, since it may be found even in a rat hole. Yet it may be truly called great, since, in point of fact, it surrounds the earth. But a still better and closer illustration for the "Way" may be found than air; and that is "Nature" itself. "Nature" is omnipresent. It nourishes and gives birth to all things. It never turns from its duty. It accepts bad and good returns alike from its offspring. It never vaunts itself because of its greatness, and yet it is the only thing that is supremely great in the universe. It is

[1] Chap. 34.

like the "Way" itself. In fact, it is the origin of the "Way." So says Laotze:

> "Man follows the example of Earth, Heaven the Way, and the Way follows the example of Nature.[1]

Indeed, to Laotze, to be able to be nothing is the "Way"; and the only thing that has accomplished the feat in the universe is "Nature" itself.

From this basic theory, Laotze develops two supplementary doctrines—"Simplicity" and "Contentment." Since the "Way" is the only road to utility and since "Nature" is the final word for man to obey, everything that is artificial or invented by the busy brain of man must be contradictory to them and thus be conducive not to good, but to evil. Thus he denounces:

> "Color blinds man's eyes; music deafens man's ears; taste makes man's mouth stale; games and sport madden man's heart; precious goods instigate man to do wrong."[2]

Such things are the very germs of strife; and such things he would like to do away with. In order to accomplish this, he advocates the doctrine of simplicity and calls for a return to nature:

> "Everything that grows may be retraced to its root. In the root you always find a tranquil state; and there you return to nature. To return to nature is to discover the normality of things. To know the normality of things is to attain wisdom. Not to know the normality of things is to encounter misfortune."[3]

[1] Chap. 25.
[2] Chap. 12.
[3] Chap. 16.

His aim, therefore, is to get back to the state of normality when all that is necessary for peaceful living is done, but everything that is beyond that pale is left out entirely. In his own rather mystic words, "The Way always does nothing, but leaves nothing undone."[1]

But can such a state remain permanent? Can mankind always live in simplicity? Conditions change; and in change lurks the possibility of strife. How, then, does Laotze meet this new menace? To answer it, he has his second doctrine—"Contentment." Says he:

> "The Way always does nothing, but leaves nothing undone. If kings can keep to this principle, all things will evolve around them. They evolve and tend to progress; then I shall stamp them with a nameless seal. What is this nameless seal but this—'No Desire'? Let there be no desire, and poise may be gained and the world will of itself become tranquil."[2]

This, however, is easier said than done. By what means can it be accomplished? Through what procedure may such a fundamental change in human nature be brought about? The entire political philosophy of Laotze is nothing but a reply to this inquiry. According to him, it is to the end of securing a life of contentment and simplicity for the people that governments and kings exist. But this is only an answer that begs a further question. Are not governments themselves an ingenious human device that is

[1] Chap. 37.
[2] *Ibid.*

full of the possibilities of strife? Is not the position of kings itself a target for envy and a bone of contention always among the hounds of humanity? Here, then, is a difficult problem for Laotze to solve.

His parry to this thrust is very typical of him. He borrows the old idea of conquest by virtue from his forefathers, but substitutes the "Way" for virtue. He presupposes an ideal ruler and believes that he who practices the "Way" is bound to gain influence without encountering opposition. Thus he declares:

> "The Way has no name, But those who hold it, none can subject. If kings keep to it, everything will attach itself to them."[1]

But as we have already explained that the "Way" is to be able to be nothing—to live simply and to die content—how can such a way then enable one to secure a powerful and enviable position in society or in the state? To us this may appear self-contradictory; but to Laotze it is quite natural. He explains:

> "Heaven is lasting, and Earth is enduring. That Heaven lasts and Earth endures is because they do not strive for their own existence. Hence, long do they exist. Thus, a sage places himself behind and naturally gets to the fore, cares not for his own life and finds it preserved, minds not his private welfare and discovers it well taken care of."[2]

[1] Chap. 32.
[2] Chap. 7.

This may be described as his "strive-not" doctrine. The efficacy of such a policy, when carried into practice, he attempts to illustrate with the example of nature:

> "The highest form of virtue resembles water. Water benefits ten thousand things and strives against nothing. It is like the Way, for it dwells in the humblest positions which the multitude of men shun." [1]

To carry the illustration further, he says:

> "That the ocean can be the king of all rivers and canyons is because it places itself lower than them. Hence of them it is to be the king. Thus, in order to stand above the people it is best to keep below them. In order to lead the people it is best to follow them. Therefore, when a sage occupies a high place, the people do not feel any burden; when he occupies a prominent position, the people do not sense any injury. The world is happy in elevating him and never feels discontented. Because he does not strive himself, none in the world is able to strive against him." [2]

Thus Laotze explains away his dilemma. Since the people attach themselves naturally to the king, his position is not built upon contention and conquest. Since the government is established in accordance with the "Way," it is not an ingenious invention that will bear no fruit but strife.

Now, granted that such a government can be established with an ideal ruler as its head practicing the inimitable "Way," what can the government do in order to secure the desired end — a life of simplicity and contentment for the people?

[1] Chap. 8.
[2] Chap. 66.

Shall it promulgate statutes in order to regulate their conduct? Shall it enforce punishments in order to curtail their excess? No, answers Laotze, the only thing proper for the government to do is—nothing. This, of course, is entirely in accordance with general trend of his thought. Since Laotze would not like to have the government itself founded upon force, naturally any encroachment upon the freedom of the people on its part is to him extremely distasteful. But his aversion to governmental intervention, unlike that of many natural-law theorists, is not based upon any concept of the individual's inalienable liberty, but upon the ideal end of the state which he has in view. Where laws are many, he believes, breaches of law are abundant; and it is only in a simple and unsophisticated society that perfect contentment and tranquility may find root. Thus he affirms:

> "When the government does nothing, the people will keep to simplicity. When the government looks into everything, the people will plunge into misbehavior." [1]

He does not need to go far to seek an example. The governments of his time practice a sorry policy directly opposite to his ideals. They seem to regard intervention in the affairs of their subjects as natural consequences of the possession of force. In point of fact, as the period is filled with private wars raging among feudal lords, the

[1] Chap. 58.

governments are more than usually oppressive. Such a policy of course incurs great disfavor with Laotze; and it is primarily as a cure for that evil that he preaches his doctrines of simplicity and contentment. Thus he says:

> "That the masses are poor is because the rulers extort too heavy taxes from them. That the masses are difficult to govern is because the rulers exact too many things from them. That the masses think too lightly of death is because they are made to think too dearly of life."[1]

In addition, he gives the rulers of his day this warning and advice:

> "The masses do not fear force, for they themselves make the greatest force. So disturb them not in their pursuit of happiness, and oppress them not in their livelihood. Feel satisfied with them; and they will feel satisfied with you."[2]

In short, force is not a reliable weapon; the use of it only promotes further strife. When a government encroaches upon the liberties of the people by sheer force, most probably the people will match it with their own. Then, not only simplicity and contentment will be destroyed, but the very foundation of the state will be put in jeopardy.

The maintenance of justice has been commonly acknowledged to be a proper pretext for governmental intervention. But to Laotze, it is no more satisfactory an excuse than force. "Fortune," says he, "is the foundation of misfortune;

[1] Chap. 75.
[2] Chap. 72.

and misfortune the cornerstone of fortune. He who knows what a good government can do does not resort to justice. Justice often leads to injustice. Good often produces evil."[1] Moreover, justice can never be maintained without force; and where justice is strict, evasions of it will be all the more cunning. So Laotze expatiates:

> "If you govern a state with justice, then you have to resort to force and apply craft. But if you do nothing, you will gain the world. How do I know? Because of this: The more there are restrictions in the world, all the more do the people become poor. The better the material comforts of the people are, the more do states become confused. The larger the share of cunning men are endowed with, the more do unnatural things occur. Hence, says the sage: 'I do nothing and the people will evolve of themselves. I preserve my poise, and the people will gain tranquility of themselves. I make no plan, and the people will become well-to-do of themselves. I have no desire, and the people will return to nature of themselves.'"[2]

Truly, to no other political philosophy than his can be applied with more appropriateness this statement: "That government is best which governs the least."

Yet there is something which the government may do, if by "doing" we mean following a course of nature. And perhaps it is a thing the government must do in order to secure the desired end, in the sense that the laws of nature cannot be disobeyed without incurring grave and undesirable consequences such as strife and confusion.

[1] Chap. 58.
[2] Chap. 57.

What is this something? The answer is found in the somewhat astounding principles of the stultification of the people. Declares Laotze:

> "The good rulers in the olden times did not enlighten the people, but stultified them. That the people are difficult to govern is because they have too much knowledge. Thus, to rule a state by means of knowledge is to poison it; to rule it not by means of knowledge is to benefit it." [1]

The reason why knowledge is poisonous is explained in the following manner:

> "Those who seek knowledge do daily desire more. Those who seek the Way do daily desire less. Less and less till there is nothing to do — till they do nothing and yet leave nothing undone. The world is always to be had by doing nothing. When one finds something to be done, then he is not good enough to deserve the world." [2]

In fact, from knowledge men learn cupidity; and from cupidity birth is given to strife. The apple of knowledge is therefore mother of all terrestrial evil; and in order to restore fallen humanity to their happy Eden, it is necessary to nip the very bud of that sinful tree. So we read:

> "Esteem not ability, so that the people may not quarrel. Prize not precious goods, so that the people may not steal. Incite not cupidity, so that the people's minds may not be confused. Thus the rule of the sage is to fill their stomachs and to empty their hearts, to strengthen their sinews, and to weaken their ambitions. He keeps the people always without knowledge and without desire. He causes that the crafty do not dare to act. He does nothing; therefore nothing is misruled." [3]

[1] Chap. 65.
[2] Chap. 48.
[3] Chap. 3.

But even with such a state Laotze is not satisfied. He does not wish to have the king conscientiously and constantly on the vigil to keep the people in a blissful simplicity. He wants the people to be simple of themselves. Thus he says:

> "Abandon virtue and discard wisdom, and the advantage to the people will be a hundredfold. Abandon benevolence and discard justice, and the people will become filial and loving anew. Abandon craft and discard profit, and there will be neither thief nor bandit. But these three things are not sufficient to make the theory complete. We must attach them to this: Return to Nature and keep to simplicity, lessen selfishness and reduce desire."[1]

This is, however, arguing around a circle. In order to gain simplicity, one is made to bury the forbidden fruit. But in order to bury the fruit, one finds that he needs the assistance of simplicity. The road to the lost paradise certainly appears puzzling to fallen humanity!

In order to get himself out of this mess, Laotze evokes again the help of the "Way," and conjures up also the ancient theory of exemplary kingship. He puts these two into one forge and molds them together into a shield to defend himself.

> "All the difficult accomplishments in the world have always an easy start. All the great things in the world have always a small beginning. The sage never attempts to do great things; therefore he achieves greatness in the end."[2]

[1] Chap. 19.
[2] Chap. 63.

The idea is that if the king, or the sage, cultivates his own person in practicing the "Way," he will not find it hard to convert all the world as well.

But first of all, how may the king perfect himself in the "Way," or the art of being able to be nothing? To achieve this feat, three things are required of him. In the first place, he must discard his egoism, or, in other words, erase his consciousness of a "self." It is Laotze's belief that the root of all strife and confusion is planted in such a consciousness; when one knows that he possesses a "self," then and not till then does he begin to fear for his own safety. When he begins to fear, then he begins to desire. When desires are rife, then conflicts become rampant. Moreover, between knowledge and egoism there is a close connection. (It is only after Adam has eaten the forbidden fruit that he realizes his own nudity and dares not face God.) So for a person who wishes to eradicate the tree of knowledge, it cannot be strange that the consciousness of a "self" must also be leveled with the dust. Furthermore, if one sincerely wishes to live in peace with and usefulness to humanity, one cannot afford to have a "self." For it is only when one does not know the existence of his "self" that one is most at home with the whole world and disposed to think kindly of everybody. Thus affirms Laotze:

> "That misfortune and danger always threaten me is because I have a self. Suppose I have no self, then what

misfortune or danger do I fear? Hence, he can be given the world whose self (since he has no longer consciousness of it) nothing can change. He can be trusted with the world whose self nothing can harm." [1]

In the second place, the sage must do away with desire and instill in himself a spirit of contentment. This is a comparatively easy step after one has rid himself of "self." So we shall only cite a few passages to indicate Laotze's emphasis of the necessity of contentment to individual welfare.

"The greatest misfortune is not to know where to stop; the greatest crime is to desire more. Know that enough is enough, and you shall always have enough." [2]

Again,

"Fame and life; which is dearer? Body and property; which weighs more? Gain and loss; which gives pain? He who desires much, risks much, hoards much, loses much. Know the time when it is enough, and you will not know shame. This is the way to gain in the long run." [3]

Then, there is the principle which we have already discussed before and which may be summarized by the statement: "In order to stand above the people, it is best to keep below them. In order to lead the people, it is best to follow them." This is, of course, a natural sequel to Laotze's conception of the "Way:" One must make oneself somewhat like an empty space

[1] Chap. 13.
[2] Chap. 46.
[3] Chap. 44.

before one can be useful. From another angle, this principle is also a supplement to the doctrine of self-effacement. For it is only when one has forgotten the existence of his "self" that one can practice to perfection the "Way," and can become willing to place himself like water in the "humblest positions which men shun." But once one learns this art of being always behind, he will soon find himself called by the multitude of men to their fore. Explains Laotze:

> "Roundness is the way to preservation; suppleness is the way to being straight. Unfilled, and you have a chance to be filled. Generally dress in old habiliments, and you will look all the more resplendent when in new ones. There is always hope for Little to be More; but for Much there can be nothing but confusion. Hence, the sage always keeps himself humble to be an example to the world. He is famous, for he is not ostentatious. He is glorious, for he does not display himself. Because he is not proud of his own doings, he is honored; because he is not supercilious because of his high place, he is elevated. He does not strive himself; therefore none in the world can strive against him."[1]

To summarize all the requirements of the sage, let us hear Laotze again in his own words:

> "Three precious things I have; them I hold and keep: The first is named Benevolence, the second Thrift, and the third 'Dare not be before the people.' Benevolence begets courage. Thrift produces amplitude. 'Dare not be before the people,' and my accomplishments will endure."[2]

In other words, "benevolence" is the result of self-effacement. Thrift is the outcome of a

[1] Chap. 22.
[2] Chap. 67.

of a sense of contentment. And "Dare not be before the People" is but an expression of the art of being able to be nothing.

All these things the sage, or the king, must endeavor to learn first before he can extend their influence to others. But it is only after he becomes able to extend it to others that the end of giving the people a life of simplicity and contentment may be fulfilled. Thus says Laotze:

> "Cultivate this is the person, and the virtue becomes real. Cultivate this in the family, and the virtue thrives. Cultivate this in the town, and the virtue grows. Cultivate this in the state, and the virtue prevails. Cultivate this in the world, and the virtue becomes universal." [1]

There is, however, one more requirement for the sage to fulfill. That is, all these things which he is supposed to do—the cultivation of his own person as well as the cultivation of others—must be done in a most natural way without any consciousness of effort. Positive words such as "do" and "accomplish" must be given no place in his dictionary. He ought to do and accomplish these things simply because he feels it is in accordance with nature to do so and to accomplish them. Hence,

> "to do a thing is to defeat it. To hold a thing is to lose it. The sage does nothing and has not defeat; holds nothing and therefore has no loss. The common people, in prosecuting their affairs, often are defeated at the very point of accomplishing them. Be as cautious in the end as at the beginning, and there will be nothing that

[1] Chap. 54.

will be defeated. Hence, the sage desires to have to desire, and does not value things that are difficult to get; learns not to learn, and does not attempt to be better than the people. He agrees with the nature of everything, and dares not do a thing."[1]

Again, he proposes that the sage should always keep in his mind this ideal:

"When the feat is achieved, and the task is done, all the people will say that I have only been in accordance with nature."[2]

Thus Laotze completes his theory of a return to nature. He does not only call for such a return, but wants the people to accomplish it without any consciousness of effort. It is to this end that he denounces justice and anathematizes knowledge, advocates simplicity and preaches contentment. It is also to this end that he visualizes a sage who is able to practice the "Way," transfigure the multitude, and yet remain wholly unaware of both the existence of his "self" and the magnitude of his work. Under such a system, therefore, it is not strange that any positive, assertive effort be looked upon with horror and rejected as being a menace. Thus he affirms, classifying different governments:

"The best government is one only the existence of which the governed know. The next is one which the governed like and praise. Then comes the government which the governed fear; and last the one which the governed defy."[3]

[1] Chap. 17.
[2] Chap. 17.
[3] Chap. 18.

Nor can it appear strange, since even the government which is liked and praised falls short of Laotze's ideal, that in his scheme of things such concepts as justice, benevolence, law, or anything that has a smack of human effort, should be considered everywhere as simply rubbish and nuisances. For, says he:

> "It is only when the great Way is displaced that benevolence and justice come into existence. It is only when wisdom and sagacity are distinguished that falsehood and cunning become prominent. It is only when social relationships are in discordance that there appear filial sons and loving parents. It is only when the state is in chaos that we find faithful ministers and loyal servants." [1]

In short, justice often produces injustice. Good often produces evil. And assertive effort is the thing that produces them all. The best way to live, therefore, is by forgetting such effort. The best state, or society, to live in is one in which such a life is made possible. Otherwise, once you leave simplicity and contentment behind and start on a journey of effort, there will be no end to the path of your degeneration. Thus we read:

> "When the people have lost nature as their guide, virtue appears. When virtue is darkened, benevolence becomes the prevailing principle. When benevolence is discarded, justice is established in its stead. When justice is corrupt, tradition marks the order of the day. When tradition is disregarded, then loyalty and probity slacken, and chaos commences." [2]

[1] Chap. 18.
[2] Chap. 38.

Thus, in the opinion of Laotze, to prevent the downfall of humanity, we must first never leave the ideal state; and if we have left it, we must return to it as quickly as possible. For it is only in the ideal state that we can find true tranquillity and contentment. The following is a picture of the life of its people.

> "They have more utensils than they care to use. They do not risk their lives in order to emigrate to distant lands. They have vehicles both for land and for water; but none use them. They have armour and weapons; but none wield them. They think their food fragrant, their dress elegant, their home happy, and their customs enjoyable. Nations border upon each other so closely that their people can be seen by each other, and the barking of their dogs and the crowing of their cocks can be heard by each other; but still their people age and die, and do not communicate with one another." [1]

Such, then, is the paradise to which Laotze would like to restore all of us. Yet one may not be labelled as entirely ungrateful, if he feels a little hesitancy in accepting this unalloyed blessing. Of course to those who have an entirely different view of life, and who believe in the indispensability of civilization to man, Laotze's picture of ideal life cannot be anything but insufferable. Its simplicity appears but a prolongation of monotony; its contentment seems to be gained only at the expense of progress. But even granting that between progress and contentment there is enough room for debate, and waiving the objection

[1] Chap. 80,

as a matter that depends entirely upon the individual's point of view, we still find that criticisms of Laotze's political philosophy are not lacking. In the first place, the soundness of his "Way" is open to doubt. He seems to lay too much emphasis upon the utility of non-assertion, and none at all upon that of assertion. It is as Hsuntze says, "He sees something in the faculty to contract, but nothing in the faculty to expand."[1] Our old illustration may be used again here for explanation. The earthenware vessel is useful, not because it has only an empty space, but because it has both the empty space and the brim. But Laotze sees only the empty space and not the brim. He does not seem to know that were there no brim, there would be also no empty space.

Moreover, we believe that under his scheme of things government is not at all possible. According to him, it is to be established by means of what may be called his "strive-not" doctrine. One makes himself "self-less" and "strives against nothing; and therefore none in the world may strive against him." But this is not so in the world of realities. Should one not strive himself, that would not prevent others from striving. Let us grant there be a sage after Laotze's own heart and practicing the inimitable "Way." Let us suppose that some other man, either by

[1] Chap. 17.

accident or for some reason, comes with the purpose to kill him. Shall he follow his faith and offer no resistance? Then with him must perish also the hope of humanity. Shall he grasp a weapon and defend himself? Then that is a resort to force. The difficulty of this dilemma Laotze realizes himself; and he attempts a reconciliation of the two opposing ideas by saying, "Force is an unhappy instrument It is only used when it needs must be." But this, of course, is not a reconciliation. For once force is used, the way will be lost, and strife begin. If finally out of such a state a government emerges, it certainly cannot be said to have sprung from his "strive-not" doctrine.

Then, the greatest failing of the Taoists is their inability to accept human nature as it is. Although they claim to find the origin of their theories in nature itself, their understanding of nature does not appear to be complete. While they pore over the secrets of other things, they forget to study the limitations of their own. In the first place, they overlook the extreme difficulty, if not the impossibility, of discarding one's "self." There are certain instincts in us which we cannot suppress. There are also certain desires which act in us as constant reminders of our own existence. At any rate, confined in our bodies as we are, our thoughts can never soar far away from and above the conditions of our corporeal

[1] Chap. 31.

being. Under such circumstances, therefore, it is futile to demand from a person a complete forgetting of his "self." In the second place, they fail to perceive the natural inequality of men. Some people are born meek and gentle; some crafty and covetous. Virtue and talent are gifts of God, and may not be abandoned and discarded at will. Thus it is also impossible to eradicate knowledge without exterminating mankind as a whole. In conclusion, we may almost say that, since both the consciousness of self and the root of knowledge are themselves parts of nature, any attempt to transform them will require the greatest effort that has yet been called forth by man; and so, in spite of their pretensions to a non-assertive virtue and directly contrary to their wishes, the Taoists' theory is actually the most assertive of all theories in the world.

Such a theory is of course of no value in the field of political science, since it almost denies the latter a reason for existence. And yet one would be too rash, were one to think that it were entirely useless. Both to society as a whole and to mankind as individuals, it offers by no means insignificant service. Our animal natures tend to too much strife; it is perhaps good to have a social theory of an antipodean nature to rectify it to some extent. Again, living in this modern age of restless complexities, one cannot help envying and admiring, at times, those who can maintain

under all occasions a smile of contentment in their hearts. Then, there is that idea of selflessness. If properly erected, is it not worthy of being a pedestal for Christ Himself?

CHAPTER V

CHWANGTZE

THE great disciple of Laotze is Chwangtze, who lived in the early part of the third century before Christ. The evil of the times which had caused Laotze to preach a life of simplicity and contentment as a remedy three hundred years earlier, had now reached its climax. The seven states were being engaged in a cutthroat struggle. Not a year passed but there occurred a bloody war. Then, in addition to such martial disturbance, the people of these days were denied even the consolation of mental quietude. The Golden Age of Chinese philosophy had almost come to an end. Rival principles and schools were vying for the captivation of men's minds. Confucius and Micius had long flourished and died; and now between their disciples was being fought a constant war of the pen, which was no less furious than the wars of the sword. The very atmosphere then smelled strife.

It was in such an age that Chwangtze lived. Imbued with the ideals of Laotze, endowed with an ascetic type of mind, his political philosophy took an extremely reactionary turn. While others were struggling for power, he advocated a return to nature. While others were disputing over right and wrong, he declared that right and wrong

were matters not worthy of human understanding. His was, therefore, a philosophy of negation.

From an agnostic and rather pessmistic point of view he begins by saying:

> "My life is bounded; but knowledge is not. What a pity it is, then, for the bounded to chase after the boundless!"[1]

Since such is his belief, he considers it ridiculous for any one to argue about truth. For, contends he, where the subject lies so far beyond our reach, the difference even between the highest and lowest of human understandings cannot but appear infinitesimal. Under such circumstances, how can one then pride himself simply because he happens to be higher by an inch, like the King of Lilliput, than others?

> "The insects of the morning do not know evening twilight. The worms of summer do not know spring and autumn. In the south Ch'o, there is a tree which regards five hundred years as a single spring and another five hundred years as a single autumn. In ancient times, there was a great oak to which eight hundred years was but a spring and another eight hundred years but an autumn. Now Pengtsu, who had only lived a comparatively long life for man, is admired by all; and every one wishes to be like him. Is not this pitiable?"[2]

In fact, there can be no criterion by which to judge truth. One party declares he is right; another says he is wrong. They argue and they

[1] Chap. 3.
[2] Chap. 1.

fight. But what just decision can they finally reach? And who in this wide world is competent to give that decision?

"Suppose you and I debate. You worst me and I do not worst you; does this prove that you are really right and I am really wrong? Or, if I worst you and you do not worst me, am I really right and are you really wrong? Is there at all a right? Is there at all a wrong? Are we both right? Or are we both wrong? You and I cannot understand each other, biased by our own views as we are. Whom shall we have, then, to judge us right? Suppose we let one who agrees with you judge us. He already agrees with you; how can he judge aright? Suppose we let one who agrees with me judge us. He already agrees with me; how can he judge aright? Suppose we let one who differs from you judge us. He differs from you already; how can he judge aright? Suppose we let one who differs from me judge us; He differs from me already; how can he judge aright? Suppose we let one who differs from us both judge us. He already differs from us both; how can he judge aright? Suppose we let one who agrees with us both judge us. He already agrees with us both; how can he judge aright?"[1]

The fact is that each individual has his point of view; and to each his own point of view is always rational.

"The monkeys love their own females. So do the deer. So do the fishes. Mao-Ch'aang and Lichi—these famous beauties are what we men admire. But those fishes that see them plunge deep into the water; those birds that see them fly high up into the air; those deer that see them instantly take to their heels. Of the four, which knows true beauty?"[2]

Thus each is conditioned by his own point of view; and each is impervious to the light that

[1] Chap, 2.
[2] *Id.*

shines upon others. What is one man's meat becomes another man's poison. In turn, what is one man's poison is another man's meat. Thus says he:

> "What is right is also wrong. What is wrong is also right. Here is a set of rights and wrongs. There is another set of rights and wrongs. Is there really any right or wrong? Or is there neither right nor wrong? Let the rights and the wrongs never oppose each other,—that is the key to the Way."[1]

Here we come then to the fundamental principle of Chwangtze's philosophy. It is the old Way of Laotze; but it is also given an additional meaning. Laotze has affirmed that the Way is to be able to do nothing. Now, Chwangtze adds that the Way is also to be able to know nothing. Since it is impossible to decide among rival principles which is right and which is wrong, the sage must refrain, therefore, from committing himself to any onesided view. He must keep his mind forever a blank. There must be on it not the slightest smutch of dirt in the shape of any preconceived notion. He must be able to regard everything as right, or still better, to regard everything as wrong. He must be able to view things from all possible standpoints, and not be biased by any particular one. For that is the only way to see everything as it is. Hence, says Chwangtze:

> "From the standpoint of the Way, nothing is good or bad. From the standpoint of the things, each of them

[1] Chap. 2.

prizes itself and condemns others. From the standpoint of the differences of things: if you view everything from the angle from which it appears great, then everything is great. If you view everything from the angle from which it appears small, then everything is small. If you know that Heaven and Earth are like grains of rice and that the tip of a feather is like a mountain, then you understand the meaning of "difference." From the standpoint of the merits of things: if you view everything from the angle from which it appears to have merits, then everything has merits. If you view everything from the angle from which it appears not to have merits, then nothing has merit. If you know that east and west are opposite to each other and yet they cannot exist without each other, then you can determine the problem of merits. From the standpoint of their characters: if you view everything from the angle from which it appears wrong, then everything is wrong. If you view everything from the standpoint from which it appears right, then everything is right. If you know that Yao [the best ruler China is supposed ever to have had] and Cheh [the worst ruler China is supposed ever to have had], each thinks himself right and the other wrong, then you can understand the significance of character."[1]

Thus we find, strange as it may seem, that the way to be able to know nothing is to be able to know everything,—to be able to view things from all points of view. Here, then, is the connection between Chwangtze's agnosticism and naturalism. Here then is the bridge that transports him from a rather pessimistic start to an excessively optimistic conclusion. Since one must learn to see everything from all points of view, what can one do but return to Nature for guidance? Nature treats all alike, and does not make any discriminations. She is the mother of everything, and

[1] Chap. 14.

she is a catalogue of all possible points of view. So in nature alone can one find a universal standpoint, which offers at the same time an escape from the entanglements of particularistic rights and wrongs. Explains Chwangtze:

> "Where is the Way concealed so that we must have falsehood and truth? Where is the Word concealed so that we must have right and wrong? Is there any place where the Way cannot go and dwell? Is there any place where the Word cannot exist and be applied?
>
> "It is only when the Way is concealed in narrow views and the Word is concealed in trifling contentions that there arise such things as the rights and wrongs of the Confucianists and the Micianists. Each of them considers wrong what the other considers right; and considers right what the other considers wrong. Now, if we want to point out that they both are wrong, we need only to use the arguments of each of them against the other, As a matter of fact, everything may be said to be right; everything may be said to be wrong. From the other's point of view, what is right may not be seen; but from the individual's point of view, what is right may be. Hence, I say: wrong comes from right, and right comes from wrong. That is how birth is given to right and wrong. But in fact, what is birth to the living may be death to the dead; what is death to the living may be birth to the dead. What may be done to one may not be done to another; and what may not be done to one may be done to another. What is right is also wrong; and what is wrong is also right. Therefore, the sage does not follow these things; but views them from the standpoint of nature."[1]

So this is the secret means by which the sage frees himself from all earthly particularistic biases. The solitary standpoint he has is that of nature itself. From that point he surveys the whole world not with an eye of discrimination but with

[1] Chap. 2.

the faith that none of the things that exist is either right or wrong, but that all of them have their uses. Thus, the best way to make all things fulfill their natures is to keep them in harmony and contentment, so that they do not interfere with each other.

"Everything has its rights. Everything has its uses. The horizontal beam, the vertical pillar, an ugly woman, a famous beauty — all these things apparently contrary and opposite are born of one nature in the eyes of the Way. Only the wise know that they are born of the same nature. Hence, he does not discriminate among them, but gives them repose in a state of normalcy. To be normal is to be useful. To be useful is to be harmonious. To be harmonious is to be content. To be content is to reach the height of excellence."[1]

Such a philosophy naturally leads one's imagination backward to the natural state of men, which perhaps never existed, but which has always offered a particular fascination to people who are prone to mourn over the degeneration of his times. So Chwangtze believes, following in the foot steps of his teacher, Laotze:

"The wisdom of the ancients did reach the height of excellence. How high? There were those who did not even know that there were things. That was the highest, the perfect. Nothing could be above that. After them came those who knew that there were things but did not know that there were differences. Then came those who knew that there were differences among things, but did not know that there was right and wrong. When right and wrong was distinguished, then The Way prevailed no longer."[2]

[1] Chap. 2.
[2] *Id.*

How was the degeneration brought about? In reply, Chwangtze delivered a tirade against the so-called "sages," who chiefly had been responsible for what we term "civilization," and whom other schools besides that of the Taoists had worshipped as masters and teachers. He is particularly ferocious towards the Confucianists, and attributes the evil of the times mostly to the invention of virtue, or benevolence, and propriety, or justice—two cardinal principles of the Confucian philosophy.

He gives first a picture of the felicitous natural state as he conceives it:

> "The people had a regular nature. They wove to clothe. They ploughed to eat. That was their common virtue. They were one and not factious, this being a gift with which their creator had endowed them. Thus in the golden age they walked with ease, they looked with self-sufficiency. At that time, there was no path nor tunnel in the mountains, nor boats nor bridges over the waters. All things grew in common and were neighborly. Birds and animals formed flocks and herds; vegetables and plants sprouted in miscellany. Thus animals could be ridden without reins, and the nests of birds could be peeped into without causing any disturbance. In such a golden age, when we lived with birds, animals, and all other creatures, how could we know the difference between good men and evil folk? We were all ignorant—we had no differing virtues. We were all devoid of desire—we had simplicity. In simplicity we found our own natures."[1]

Such a description calls back immediately to our memory a similar one made by Rousseau. Like that of Jean Jacques, this was made out to be

[1] Chap. 9.

too happy a paradise to last long. The forbidden fruit had already ripened, and into the garden had crept serpents in the shape of sages. So, continues Chwangtze, with a sigh of regret:

"But forth the sages came. They propagated virtue and they acted upon propriety, and the universe began to doubt. They made music and created rites, and the world became divided."[1]

But why were virtue and propriety fruits of such hideous venom? How could they work such a tremendous change upon mankind? For answer Chwangtze gives two reasons. In the first place, it is because those inventions are contrary to nature. We are born with virtue and propriety; it is, therefore, fitting and proper that we should live and die also without them. Nature has not designed them to incommode us; there is no reason why we should make ourselves extremely uncomfortable by means of them.

"If you straighten a thing with hooks, ropes, measurements, and tools, you encroach upon its faculty. If you strengthen a thing with ropes, paste, and lacquer, you intrude upon its virtue. If you erect vituals, devise music, and talk about virtue and propriety in order to regulate the people's minds, you make them lose their nature. There is such a thing as nature in this universe. According to nature, one is bent without hooks, straight without ropes, round without a compass, square without a plane, attached together without lacquer and paste, and regulated without chains and fetters. Thus the universe is naturally born, and does not know that it is born; and all gains without knowing why it gains."[2]

[1] Chap. 9.
[2] Chap. 8.

How much similarity there exists between this ancient philosopher of the third century before Christ and our modern Jean Jacques who came more than twenty centuries later! For proof, one need not go far but open the Social Contract and read its first sentence, "Man was born free, but finds himself in chains!"

Nor do these newfangled inventions, such as virtue and propriety, curb only our liberty. According to Chwangtze, they also work upon us a great injury. Explains he,

> "The neck of a duck is short; but if you lengthen it, it will regret it. The neck of a stork is long; but if you break it, it will grieve. A long nature is not to be broken. A short nature is not to be lengthened."[1]

The innovation of the sages, according to Chwangtze, therefore, has done to mankind no less a crime than breaking their long natures and lengthening their short ones. He illuminates the subject further:

> "Horses have hoofs which are able to tread upon frost and snow, and hide which can endure wind and cold. They browse upon grass, drink water, shake their legs and ramble in the field—this is the true nature of horses. To them, a furnished stable and a straw bed can be of no use. But along comes Pei-Lo. Says he: "I can train horses well." And he goes to brand them, brush them, fasten them with reins and place them in the stable. A third of the horses is thus extinguished. Again, he denies them food and water, rides them, makes them gallop, puts bits and bridles in the front and whips and spurs behind; and the number of horses that die from the training is over a half."[2]

[1] Chap. 8.
[2] Chap. 9.

According to Chwangtze, what the sages have done with their principles and regulations to men is just what Pei-Lo has done with his training to the horses. They have warped their natures and stunted their growth.

> "How do I know of this? Since Emperor Yü drew principles from virtue and propriety to regulate the nation, the whole nation has been wearying itself with virtue and propriety. Is not this a substitution of virtue and propriety for our natures? So I have always thought that ever since the Three Dynasties, every one in the nation has exchanged his nature for something else. The commonplace strive at the peril of life for wealth; scholars for fame, ministers for their families, sages for the nation. Thus, although the professions of these several people are different and their titles are diverse, yet so far as injuring their own natures and spoiling their own lives are concerned, they are all the same. Chang and Ku, the two shepherds, both went out to tend some sheep, and both lost their flocks. What did Chang do? He was occupied in reading. What did Ku do? He was engaged in gambling. The occupations of the two men were different, but they lost their flocks all the same. Pei-Yi died for his principles under the mount of So-Yang, Cheh the bandit died for plunder on the East Plateau. The two men died for different objects, but in maiming their lives and ruining their natures, they both had an equal share. Why should we necessarily praise Pei-Yi and blame Cheh the bandit?"[1]

So in both cases they have acted in direct opposition to nature. Nature has given them simplicity; but they have discarded it, be it for a principle or for plunder. Nature has given them life; but they have wrecked it all the same, however different their ends may have been. In

[1] Chap. 8.

both cases they have abandoned their own natures in order to pursue something quite foreign to them. Chwangtze continues:

> "What I call good is not benevolence and justice but only good in keeping with one's proper virtue. What I call good is not what benevolence and justice dictate as good, but simply following one's own nature. What I call wisdom is not to be able to know others, but to know one's self. What I call perpiscuity is not to be able to perceive others, but to perceive one's self. As for those who do not perceive themselves but others, and who are not satisfied with themselves but with others; they are satisfied with others' satisfaction and not with their own, and they follow others' natures and not their own. If they follow others' natures and not their own, whether good or bad, they are excessive and gone astray."[1]

But that is not all the sages have done to mankind. A still greater evil is yet to come out of their unwelcome innovations. They have given people desire, restlessness, craft, and a ready mind to hurt others in order to benefit themselves. To illustrate this point, Chwangtze narrates, or rather invents the following story of an incident supposed to have happened to one of the disciples of Confucius whom it is his specialty to ridicule:

> "Tse-Kung journeyed south to Ch'o passing by the north side of the River Han. He saw an old man about to do some farming. The latter had dug out a channel to a well, and was carrying water out with a jar in order to wet the field. All perspiring, he seemed to waste much effort and gain little result. Said Tse-Kung to him, 'There is a machine which can water a hundred acres a day, needing little effort but gaining great result. Would you

[1] Chap. 8.

not like to have one, sir?" The farmer raised his head, looked at him, and said. "How is it made?" Answered Tse-Kung. 'You make the machine out of wood, heavy at one end and light at the other. It brings water as rapidly as a stream or boiling soup. It is called a tread-mill." The farmer made a grimace, colored, laughed and said, "I learned of my teacher, Laotze: 'He who has designing machines must have designing affairs. He who has designing affairs must have a designing heart. When one has a designing heart in his chest, then one is not pure and whole. When one is not pure and whole, then his spirit is not in repose. Spirit not in repose — that is not permitted by the Way!' Not that I have not known of the machine; but out of shame I have not wished to use it."[1]

Or, to continue the illustration of the horses:

"The horses live by water and grass, twine their necks with each other when happy, turn their backs and kick each other when angry — that was all the horses knew. But after we have curbed them with reins and shod them with steel, the horses begin to learn kicking against the pricks, taking the bit between their teeth, and many other tricks. That the knowledge of horses has been so extended as to be able to practice deception and treachery, is the crime of Pei-Lo."[2]

The reason why such innovations inevitably lead to evil is, therefore, found in the fact that they incite fear for one's safety and arouse desire for gain. Once one finds that craftiness leads to profit, then every one wishes to excel in craftiness. Once one discovers that knowledge is the way to distinction, then every one yearns for the possession of knowledge. But as knowledge is boundless, so there will be no end to their desire, and hence no end to strife. Says Chwangtze:

[1] Chap. 12.
[2] Chap. 9.

"If the rulers seek knowledge and do not practice the Way, there will be great confusion in the world. How do I know? As the knowledge of bows and arrows, springs and machines, becomes advanced, birds are confounded up in the air. As the knowledge of hooks and baits, nets and meshes, becomes advanced, fishes are confounded down in the water. As the knowledge of snares and traps, nooses and toils, becomes advanced, animals are confounded in the marshes. As the varieties of knowledge and craft, right and wrong, agreement and difference, become multiple, the common people are confounded with contentions. That is why the world has been often confused. The crime is chargeable to the desire for knowledge." [1]

One may argue that knowledge is created for the purpose of encouraging people to do good, and not evil. Knowledge breeds understanding, and understanding produces virtue. But this Chwangtze does not for a moment admit. He falls back upon Laotze's idea that good often produces evil, and goes even farther than Laotze by saying that knowledge produces more evil than good. For, according to him, it is through knowledge that men learn to perpetrate evil via the route of appearing good, and perform enormities which would not be possible were they still in their orginal state of simplicity and devoid of the newly invented instruments of cunning.

"You make pecks and bushels in order to measure things; and there will be people who will steal the things along with your pecks and bushels. You make scales and balances in order to appraise things; and there will be people who will steal the things along with your scales and balances. You make tallies and seals in order to pledge

[1] Chap. 10.

things; and there will be people who will steal the things along with your tallies and seals. You make virtue and propriety in order to rectify things, and there will be people who will steal the things along with your virtue and propriety. Take this instance: those who steal trifling things, such as a hook, are usually punished; but on the contrary, those who steal nations become princes. And in the abodes of the princes is always displayed in flying colors virtue and propriety. Is not this a case of stealing virtue and propriety, wisdom and knowledge?" [1]

The fact is that of the same mother are evil and good born. Knowledge does breed understanding; but understanding may be used for either purpose. Moreover, insists Chwangtze, as knowledge instigates competition, so there is more likelihood that knowledge will be utilized for selfish ends, that is, for evil.

"The followers of Cheh, the bandit, once asked him, "Has banditry also a principle?" Answered Cheh 'What things that exist do not have a principle? Now, to conjecture what is stowed in a house—that is foresight. To enter first—that is courage. To come out last—that is propriety. To know what can be and what cannot be done—that is wisdom. To divide equally—that is virtue. None has succeeded in becoming a great bandit who does not possess these five things.' From this standpoint we see that just as good men cannot be established without the principles of the sages, so cannot Cheh the bandit prosper without them. As in the world there are more bad men than good men, so the sages have done the world more injury than benefit. Thus it is said. . . . Where the sages appear, bandits become rampant." [2]

It is thus proved that virtue and propriety, good and evil, in one word—knowledge, warps our natures and arouses strife. After surveying

[1] Chap. 6.
[2] Chap. 10.

these causes of degeneration and examining the degenerate conditions of his times, Chwangtze takes pity upon fallen humanity, and says:

> "They and things endeavor mutually to maim and injure each other. Their actions go to such extremes, as if they were galloping with all speed and could not be stopped. They work and toil through life, and do not find any success at the end. Wearied and broken, still they do not know where to return. How sad all this is![1]"

For the above reasons, naturally Chwangtze feels resentful towards all kinds of regulations, and is particularly rabid against the practice of his times. The governments then were more than usually oppressive. Owing to the rise of the school of legalists, the rulers were endeavoring to compass the enslavement of the people by means of laws and regulations. They would encourage what they approved by rewards, and suppress what they disliked by punishment. With these weapons, they managed to concentrate in themselves all the wealth and power in their respective states. So against them Chwangtze launches this tirade:

> "After honor and disgrace are established, men begin to know what to fear. After goods and wealth are accumulated, men begin to know what to strive for. How, since what men fear is established and what men strive for is accumulated, how can the result be other than confusion? The rulers of ancient times always attributed success to the people and failure to themselves, and always considered the people right and themselves wrong. Thus if ever one being went astray from its proper nature, they would

[1] Chap. 7.

censure, themselves. Nowadays, this is no longer true. The rulers monopolize knowledge and think those foolish who are not learned. They demand great sacrifices and reprimand those who dare not render them. They impose heavy burdens and punish those who cannot bear them, When the people find their strength insufficient, naturally they resort to deception. When they find their ability insufficient, naturally they resort to falsehood. When they find their wealth insufficicnt, naturally they resort to theft. That the people come to such lowly practices, whose fault is it?"[1]

Now Chwangtze is not resentful towards the legalists alone. Against Confucianists, and Micianists, he holds probably even a greater grudge. For these, he thinks, are a more serious menace to mankind because they hide a vicious venom behind an apparently virtuous veil. Both of the schools, although they differe in many respects and are vying for predominance, have the same purpose in view—the welfare of the people. Their common slogan, to use a Chinese phrase, is to govern in such a manmer as "to win the people's heart." To this Chwangtze strongly objects, nor hesitates to carry his naturalism to its logical extremes.

"Laotze was once asked this question: 'If the world is not governed, how can the hearts of the people be at ease?'"

"Said Laotze: 'Beware! You must not try to win the heart of man. This heart of man, if repressed will slide downwards; if lifted up will soar upwards. Neither upwards nor downwards, there you have a nice balance. Otherwise, if you interfere with it, it may become as scorching as fire, or as chilling as ice. It is so swift that

[1] Chap. 10.

it can encircle the world many times in the twinkling of an eye. When it stays, it is as calm as a mountain spring. When it moves, it turns topsy-turvey even Heaven itself. Haughty, disdainful, impossible of being attached to anything — that is the heart of man.

"'Ever since Hwangti'" (a famous ancient Emperor who lived about two centuries before Yao and Shun) "'first employed virtue and propriety to win the people's hearts, emperors have toiled so hard as to leave no hair on their arms and their thighs in order to govern the Empire well, have worried their bodies and souls in order to practice virtue and propriety, have curbed their natures in order to be in accordance with laws and regulations, and yet have not succeeded well. . . . Down to modern times, the world has grown even more horrible. There is mutual suspicion between the fortunate and the unfortunate. There is mutual deception between the wise and the foolish. There is mutual condemnation of the good and the bad. There is mutual ridicule between the false and the truthful. So degraded has the world become! The people no longer share great virtue in common; and nature becomes divided. The whole world is desirous of knowledge; and the people are exhausted by their own efforts.

"Laws are established in order to curb, and punishments are made in order to kill. . . . In such confusion the world is; and it is all because of attempting to win people's hearts.'"[1]

Concisely, man's heart is not a stable matter. The only way to make it stable is to leave it in its original simplicity. Once this injunction is disobeyed, then Pandora's box is opened. Differences will appear; passions will be aroused; and men will be driven to form likes and dislikes. After that comes the deluge. There will be no end of confusion. There will be no end to strife. No matter how assiduously the rulers toil for the

[1] Chap. 11.

people's welfare, yet to the people response and contentment will come not.

What is the remedy then for such a dire situation? How can the people attain true repose and contentment again? Like Laotze, Chwangtze gives this advice: return to nature. He also presupposes an ideal ruler, and believes that the perfect government can have only two functions —to stultify the people and to do nothing. Thus he says:

> "I have heard of checking and keeping the nation, but not of governing it. We check the nation lest it exceed its nature. We keep the nation lest it shift its virtue. If the nation does not shift its virtue and exceed its nature, what is there left to be governed?" [1]

In order to stultify the people—or, to use a more euphemistic term, to maintain the people in their original state of blissful simplicity—it is the duty of the ideal ruler to see to it that all possibilities of seducing them be prevented, all sinful innovations be suppressed, and all things that are conducive to knowledge and desire be exterminated. This principle is told in an allegory by Chwangtze:

> "Hwangti was going to call on the Spirit of Great Tao on the mount of Chu-Ch'ih . . . but lost his way. By chance, he met a boy watching a drove of horses. So he asked him the direction. Said Hwangti, 'Do you know the Mount of Chu-Ch'ih?' 'Yes,' answered the boy. 'Do you know where the Spirit of Great Tao dwells?' 'Yes,' answered the boy. 'What a strange little boy you are!' cried Hwangti, 'You not only know the Mount of Chu-Ch'ih, but also where the Spirit of Great Tao dwells. I beg to ask you then to tell me how to govern the world.'

[1] Chap. 11.

"The little boy answered: 'To govern the world is just like what I am doing, and nothing more. When I was very young, I wandered by myself within the universe. I had the disease of misty eyes. In order to cure it, an ancient man taught me to drive the carriage of the sun and to ramble in the wilderness. Now my eyes are better; and I am thinking of rambling outside the universe. To govern the world is just like this: I have no concern for it at all.'

"'It is true,' said Hwangti, 'that to govern the world is not your concern. But still I beg to know how to do it.' The little boy refused to answer. So Hwangti asked him again.

"Then said the little boy: 'The governing of the world — can it be different from the care of horses? One needs only to get rid of those things which do injury to the horses, that is all.'"[1]

What are the things that do injury to the herd of humanity then? They are no other than the innovations and inventions, regulations and principles, which comprise what we call civilization. All these must be destroyed, before men can be made to persist in their simplicity.

"Therefore, exterminate wisdom and discard knowledge, and banditry will be arrested. Quash the jewels and destroy the pearls, and theft will not appear. Burn the tallies and break the seals, and men will become simple-hearted. Slit the bushel and shatter the scales, and the people will no longer quarrel. Confuse musical tunes and demolish instruments, and every one in the world will be as sharp in hearing as any other. Dissipate colors and scatter pigments, and everyone in the world will be as keen in seeing as any other. Destroy hooks and ropes, compasses and planes, and the whole world will become equally skillful. Abandon benevolence and justice, and the whole world will share a common virtue."[2]

[1] Chap. 24.
[2] Chap. 10.

This, however, covers only one part of the program of government as set forth in the delightful allegory of Hwangti and the little boy—and the less important part, at that. As we remember, the little boy answered Hwangti's question twice. To get rid of things which may injure the people was given in the second reply, only after Hwangti had apparently failed to understand the first. What is the meaning of the first then? In describing his aimless ramblings, the boy meant that the people should always be allowed to follow their simple natures and that the government should do nothing at all, with the possible exception of occasionally ridding the people of things which may injure them. "Do nothing" is therefore the key word of government, according to Chwangtze, following strictly in the footsteps of his teacher. We shall give here a parable which he uses to illustrate this principle:

"Tien Keng traveled in Yin Yang, came to the river Liao, met an unknown man, and asked him, 'Tell me how to govern the nation.' Answered the unknown man, 'Go your way, you man of ruck. Why this unhappy question? I have just now been trying to make myself a man of nature. Tired of it, I ride on a swift blind bird, grope out of the universe, and ramble in the country of Nothingness, and dwell in the abode of the boundless. Why do you then disturb me with the government of a nation?' Upon a second demand, the unknown man said, "You make your mind move in calm, rest upon indifference,

[1] Chap. 10.
[2] Chap. 7.

follow the way of nature, and do not allow anything selfish. And the nation will be well governed.' "[1]

So we see that Chwangtze returns to Laotze's theory, that the ideal ruler must first cultivate the Way in himself and then convert the people to simplicity by doing nothing to change it. In such a state, since all the people become simple, none of them can be bad. Again, if they are all good, they are not conscious of it. So there exists no difference between men and things. And every one feels true contentment in his heart. Thus:

"In the age in which the highest virtue prevails, the good receive no praise and the able no distinction. The ruler is as light as the tip-top of a spray. The people are as natural as wild deer. They are upright without knowing that they are practicing the principle of justice. They love one another without knowing that they are in accordance with the theory of benevolence. They are faithful without knowing the canon of sincerity. They move with simple hearts and are mutually helpful without thinking that they are doing anything extraordinary."[2]

Thus, here again Chwangtze comes back to one of Laotze's most important principles — that is, the ideal state must be accomplished without any consciousness of effort. For illustration, we have another very delightful parable:

"Knowledge journeyed north to the Dark River, ascended the Hidden Mount, and met by chance No-Doing-No-Name. Said Knowledge to No-Doing-No-Name; 'May I ask a question? What should I think and design in order to know the Way? What should I do and pursue

[1] Chap. 7.
[2] Chap. 12.

in order to cultivate the Way? What should I follow and attend to in order to attain the Way?' Thrice he asked; but No-Doing-No-Name did not answer. Not that he refused to answer, but he did not know how to answer.

"Knowledge did not get what he desired. He returned to the south of the White River, ascended the Mount of the Foxes, and saw Mad-Speaker. So Knowledge addressed him with the same question. Said Mad-Speaker: "Oh, yes, I know. But when I am about to tell you, I forget what I want to say."

"Again, Knowledge did not get what he desired. He returned to the Imperial Palace, saw Hwangti and asked him. Said Hwangti: 'Think nothing and design nothing —that is to know the Way. Do nothing and pursue nothing—that is to cultivate the Way. Follow nothing and attend to nothing—that is to attain the Way.'

"Then Knowledge asked Hwangti, 'You and I know it now; and they do not. Which of us has gained the truth?' Answered Hwangti, 'No-Doing-No-Name has gained the truth. But you and I are far from it.'"[1]

So ends Chwangtze's political philosophy. Like that of his teacher, it is one that approaches the sublimity of a paradox. Its Way is to be able to know nothing; and yet the Way can be only attained through being able to know everything. It advocates the complete annihilation of civilization, and yet the ideal must be obtained without any consciousness of effort. It affirms that the function of the government is chiefly to do nothing; and yet, occasionally, the government must endeavor to rid the people of things which may injure them. It believes in the necessity of an ideal ruler to convert the people to simplicity; and yet the ruler is required to accomplish the

[1] Chap. 22.

task without being aware of pursuing it. How impossible all these things are!

In addition to the criticisms we have given in the previous chapter, we shall add a few more points here. Chwangtze admits that it is necessary at times to keep people away from things that may seduce them to evil. Does not that itself defeat his principle of doing nothing? Furthermore, is it not exactly to that that all governments and regulations owe their birth? The welfare of the people in the teachings of Confucius and Micus,—is it intrinsically different from Chwangtze's admission? As a matter of fact, even the system of rewards and punishments, which the legalists advocate and which Chwangtze seems to abhor, can also be attributed to the same origin. For once the government takes up such a function,the only question that remains is, how far forward it will go and not how far backward it will retreat. Either you must always maintain that absolutely nothing should be done by the government (in which case we do not see any reason for the existence of a government at all); or, if you do assign something to it, you thereby confess that its function is no longer "nothing."

Moreover, there is the question of the degeneration of the natural state. Besides the objection that, scientifically speaking, such a state has never existed, Chwangtze has still another problem to face. If the people were all so simple-hearted as he conceives them to be, how is it that knowledge

could creep out into the open? If the crime was chargeable to the sages, could not the sages also charge Nature itself with having created them? The very "degeneration" of the natural state appears thus to be a process that Nature itself has decreed. Then how can Chwangtze maintain that to return to the natural state is in accordance with the dictates of Nature? Instead it would be a clear contradiction!

The Taoist philosophy is therefore entirely unsound so far as its political aspect is concerned. It knows only the negative side of things, and not the positive. It contemplates the impossible, and not the possible. It sees but one aspect of Nature, and sees no aspect at all of men. It is, in short, ascetic.

For illustration, we can furnish no better one than that which pertains to Chwangtze himself:

"Chwangtze was fishing in the P'u when the Prince of Ch'u sent two high officials to ask him to take charge of the administration of the Ch'u state. Chwangtze went on fishing, and, without turning his head, said: 'I have heard that in Ch'u there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead now some three thousand years, and that the Prince keeps his tortoise carefully enclosed in a chest on the altar of his ancestral temple. Now, would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains venerated, or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?'

"'It would rather be alive,' replied the two officials, 'and wagging its tail in the mud.'

"'Begone!' cried Chwangtze, 'I too will wag my tail in mud.'"[1]

[1] Chap. 17.

So even while he believed that the ideal state might be brought back by an ideal ruler, he would not take the trouble to accomplish it himself. He did not wish to be disturbed at all, while "riding on a swift blind bird, groping out of the universe, and rambling in the country of Nothingness." Let us leave him then in his mystic but useless journeying and in his still more mystic and more useless peace.

CHAPTER VI

KWANGTZE

FROM the negative extreme of Chinese political philosophy, let us now turn to its direct antithesis — the school of legalists. Among the writings of the latter, "The Book of Kwangtze" is by no means the least important. It is attributed to the great statesman whose name it bears, Kwangtze, or Kwang Chung. He lived early in the seventh century before Christ and flourished even before Laotze and Confucius. As the prime minister of Earl Huan of Ch'i, he succeeded in enriching his state by developing its natural resources and enabling his master to be for thirty-nine years the undisputed leader of the feudal lords. But whether Kwangtze wrote anything that is recorded in the book now bearing his name is a question. Some parts of it, perhaps, may be ascribed to him as his sayings.[1] The larger part by far, however, must be regarded as forgery produced in that caldron of thought — the third century before Christ. So, in dealing with this chapter, when we speak of Kwangtze, it must not be thought that we mean Kwang Chung the prime minister, but the author or editor of the book, whoever he may have been.

[1] See "The Records of History," "Biography of Kwang Chung."

Though the work is not genuine, it is none the less very valuable. For one thing, like most of the writings of the legalists, it has for its subject matter purely politics and government. In this respect, therefore, it is at least more interesting, if not more instructive, to us than the works of other schools whose political ideas are only too often so interwoven with miscellaneous threads of thought that it becomes extremely difficult to disintangle them. Then, even if it may not be permissible for the book to borrow additional luster from the name of that famous prime minister, the native brilliancy of its own theories, which are truly representative of the legalists, thought in vogue in the third and fourth centuries, is of itself sufficient. Moreover, among the legalists themselves, Kwangtze occupies a preëminent position. While Han-Fe may be considered a legalist à la Taoism and Shang-Yang the preacher of legalism orthodox and catholic, Kwangtze represents that branch of the legalistic school which is seasoned not a little with the Confucian philosophy.

The chief feature that distinguishes "The Book of Kwangtze" from the writings of other legalists is found in its ethical basis. According to it, governments are established only for ethical ends, and the state itself will collapse if sound moral principles do not prevail among the people. This is clearly seen in Kwangtze's conception of the origin of the state:

"In ancient times, there existed no such distinction as that of subject and sovereign, and of superior and inferior; there was no such union as that of husband and wife, consecrated by marriage. The people lived in groups like animals, and fought with each other by sheer physical force. Hence, the cunning always deceived the stupid, the strong always oppressed the weak; and those who were old or young, helpless or destitute, could not live in peace. So at last the truly wise borrowed strength from the whole in order to curb the strong and the oppressive, promoted the things that would benefit the people, extirpated the things that did them injury, and gave correctness to their virtue; and the people obeyed them (the wise) as teachers."[1]

This instantly places Kwangtze in a position directly opposite to that of the Taoists. To the latter, the natural state is an ideal life of simplicity and contentment; to the former, it is nothing but a chaos of injustice. Again, to the latter, ethics is a poison whose contamination is looked upon with disdain and dread; but to the former, it is the only means through which peace may be gained and proper living may be obtained for men. Thus Kwangtze proceeds to declare that a state without an ethical basis is like a house without a foundation.

"The state has four pillars. When one pillar fails, it totters. When two pillars fail, it is in danger of falling. When three pillars fail, it collapses. When the four pillars all fail, it is exterminated. That which totters may be made erect anew. That which is in danger of falling may be set back again in safety. That which collapses may be raised up once more. But for that which is exterminated, there is no chance of resurrection.

[1] Chap. 31.

"What are the four pillars? The first is virtue (Li). The second is propriety. The third is uprightness. The fourth is the sense of shame. Through virtue men learn not to be excessive. Through propriety men learn not to push themselves forward. Through uprightness men learn not to conceal evil. Through the sense of shame men learn not to go astray. If the people are not excessive, then the position of the sovereign is safe. If the people do not push themselves forward, then there will not be intrigue and deception. If the people do not conceal evil, then every one will behave himself. If the people do not go astray, then there will be no misconduct."[1]

Not satisfied with a mere statement of the general principles, Kwangtze is only too willing to carry them to their logical conclusion. He wants ethics not only to be the structure of his state, but also to be the very tissue of his people.

"Those who shepherd the people desire that the people be correct in their living. As they so desire, they cannot afford not to prohibit petty follies. Petty follies are the origin of greater follies. If the petty follies are not prohibited, how is it possible that the greater follies will not do damage to the nation?

"Those who shepherd the people desire that the people have virtue. As they so desire, they cannot afford to be careless over small virtues. If they are careless over small virtues, how can they expect the people to cultivate greater virtues?

"Those who shepherd the people desire that the people have propriety. As they so desire, they cannot afford to be careless over small proprieties. If they are careless over small proprieties, how can they expect the people to practice greater proprieties?

"Those who shepherd the people desire that the people have uprightness. As they so desire, they cannot afford to be careless over small uprightnesses. If they are careless over small uprightnesses, how can they expect the people to inculcate in themselves greater uprightness?

[1] Chap. 1.

"Those who shepherd the people desire that the people have a sense of shame. As they so desire, they cannot afford to overlook the sense of shame on small occasions. If they overlook the sense of shame on small occasions, how can they expect the people to feel it on greater occasions?

"To prohibit the petty follies—that is the way to correct the people. To make the people cultivate small virtues, practice small proprieties, inculcate in themselves small uprightnesses, and feel the sense of shame on small occasions—that is the foundation of good government."[1]

How closely all these resemble the Confucian philosophy will soon be perceived when we come to a discussion of the teachings of the Great Sage. But here, even without any annotation, it cannot but be evident to us what an important part ethics plays in a system of government such as outlined in "The Book of Kwangtze."

Perhaps, Kwangtze might have become entirely Confucian, had he relied upon his ethical principles only, and developed them further. But this does not prove to be the case. Although ethics run through all the main arteries of his system, the *arteries themselves seem to be derived from quite another source.* That is, his particular concern for efficiency of the state. Like all other legalists, Kwangtze places above everything in the state one purpose and directs every force in the state towards one goal; and that purpose and goal are summed up in this one word—efficiency.

"To make the people come when they are told to come, leave when they are told to leave, give up their selfish

[1] Chap. 3.

desires and substitute their superior's mind for their own —that is the end of education. Starting from calculation and culminating in success, the word being given by one man and obeyed by ten thousand — that is the end of command. To make the people accomplish things before the order is delivered, go to their duties before they are sent for, endeavour their best without receiving any encouragement from their superiors — that is the end of customs. To make good and evil clear in the people's minds and to convert the people to virtue so that the people are afraid of punishment even before it is inflicted, and strive for good even before rewards are given — that is the end of the certainty of laws. . . . To do is to succeed, to seek is to gain; however little or much the sovereign may desire it, will be achieved — that is the end of administration. No sooner is the command given than it is performed, no sooner is the prohibition enacted than the evil is stopped; wherever anyone is within the reach of the law and under the control of custom, everything obeys the government just as the limbs obey the mind — that is the end of government."[1]

Such is Kwangtze's desire for efficiency. It is therefore natural that his whole political philosophy, aside from his ethical basis and all that pertaining to it, is entirely devoted to the attainment of the blessings of this one god. How does he proceed to do it then? He is too practical to stay at home and be satisfied with uttering vain desires. He goes directly to the temple of the god and offers him sacrifices which are calculated to appeal to the taste of that divinity. In fine, Kwangtze believes that government can be efficient only by adapting itself, first, to human nature, and second, to the circumstances of the times. Without these two requisites, however

[1] Chap. 4.

powerful a government may be, it cannot last long. After having fulfilled them, no matter what radical changes it may introduce, the government is bound to prosper.

"That a government prospers is because it acts in accordance with the mind of the people; that a government declines is because it acts in contradiction to it. The people dislike worry and toil; so I indulge and felicitate them. The people dislike poverty and lowliness; so I enrich and ennoble them. The people dislike danger, so I give them peace and safety. The people dislike extermination; so I give them nourishment and growth." [1]

Why should the government do all these things? Answers Kwangtze:

"If you can indulge and felicitate them, then they will toil and worry for you. If you can enrich and ennoble them, then they will suffer poverty and lowliness for you. If you can give them peace and safety, then they will brave danger for you. If you can give them nourishment and growth, then they can dare extermination itself for you." [2]

So here again, Kwangtze is little different from other legalists. He does not believe in the inherent omnipotence of either government or law. For he reasons that above both government and law there is fundamental human nature, and so it is futile to act against the people's desire.

"Thus punishments are not enough to intimidate people. Executions are not enough to conquer people's hearts. Though punishments be comprehensive, if the people are not intimidated, the law will not be successfully enforced. Though executions be many, if the people's hearts are not

[1] Chap. 4.
[2] Chap. 1.

won, the position of the superiors will be in jeopardy. Therefore, if you follow the people's desires, even those who are far from you will attach themselves to you. If you act against their desires, even those who are near you will rebel against you."[1]

Yet, though Kwangtze starts from a different source than that of the other legalists, he reaches the same conclusion as the others. Though he does not think that government and law of themselves are omnipotent, yet he believes that they can be made omnipotent by so adapting themselves as to agree with fundamental human desires. As the people will always be willing to do what they desire, so they will be more than willing to follow the government and laws thus formed, and so there can be neither possibility nor probability of any disobedience to such a government or of any violation of such laws. The principle is, as Kwangtze explains:

"To place the state in a position where it is impossible to totter; to store treasures in a vault whose resources it is impossible to exhaust; to hoard necessities in a storehouse whose wealth it is impossible to use up; to give such commands so that it will flow on as water will at its sources; to award to men such offices that there can be no possible quarrel among them; to make clear where death is certain; to open the path where rewards are sure; to attempt nothing which may not succeed, to seek nothing which may not be gained, to dwell not in a place where it may not be possible to dwell long, to proceed not upon a journey from which it may not be possible to return. To place the state in a position where it is impossible to totter is to conduct the government by the help of the virtuous. To store treasures in a vault whose resources it

[1] Chap. I.

is impossible to exhaust is to grow the five kinds of grain. To hoard necessities in a storehouse whose wealth it is impossible to use up is to cultivate hemp and mulberry trees (for the silkworm), and to breed the six kinds of cattle. To give such commands so that it will flow on as water will at its source is to be in accordance with the people's hearts. To award to men such offices about which there can be no quarrel is to give each his due. To make clear where death is certain is to be severe in punishment. To open the path where rewards are sure is to be sincere in granting compensations. To attempt nothing that may not be successful is to do nothing that is beyond the people's strength. To seek nothing that may not be gained is to force upon the people nothing which they may dislike. To dwell not in a place where it may not be possible to dwell long is to indulge not in the whims of a moment. To proceed not upon a journey from which it may not be possible to return is to deceive not the people." [1]

The first requisite of efficiency is, therefore, to be in accordance with the people's minds. The laws that are easy to enforce will be enforced. The government which attempts only and always that wherein it is potent is omnipotent. "The king can do no wrong" as he never does a wrong.

As a corollary to this principle, adaptability of government to the circumstances of the times is laid down as the second requisite of efficiency. Men create circumstances; and in turn circumstances modify men. If the one participates in the function of making the government efficient, the other cannot but lend a hand as well. Thus says Kwangtze:

[1] Chap. 1.

> "The sage is one who sees clearly the ways to good government and confusion, and who is well experienced with the sequence of things. In governing a nation, his aim is to benefit the people. Thus he keeps himself always up-to-date, neither envying the past nor becoming biased by the present. He changes with the times and is transformed along with the customs." [1]

Hence, unlike other idealistic schools that attempt to enact prescriptions for eternity, Kwangtze finds more changeability in human affairs and emphasizes only the present.

> "There was more than one intelligent king in ancient times. The rewards of some were more; those of others were less. The punishments of some were heavy; those of others were light. Their ways were different; but they did not purposely act contrary to each other. All of them changed only in accordance with their times and moved only in accordance with their customs." [2]

Thus, after all, Kwangtze is found to be a true legalist. His view is confined to the welfare of the state at his particular time. His ultimate aim is efficiency. His means of achieving his end is law and government.

Before we discuss his principles of law, however, it may be fitting to note first his many and various plans for adapting his government to the desires of his people. As Kwangtze has already said, "The people dislike poverty and lowliness, I enrich and ennoble them," so he considers it a duty as well as a necessity of the government to secure the material welfare of its subjects. This

[1] Chap. 47.
[2] Chap. 47.

policy is, of course, a sequel to his main doctrine of efficiency. Unlike the Confucian theory which is prompted by its canon of benevolence, Kwangtze's principle has a more practical end in view:

> "In governing a state, the first thing to do is to enrich its people. When the people are well-to-do, they are easy to govern. When they are not, they are difficult to govern. How do I know? When the people are well-to-do, they are satisfied with their neighbors and love their homes. When they are satisfied with their neighbors and love their homes, they reverence their superiors and fear punishment. When they reverence their superiors and fear punishment, then they are easy to govern. On the other hand, when the people are destitute, they are not satisfied with their neighbors and do not love their homes, they insult their superiors and dare punishment. When they insult their superiors and dare punishment, then they are difficult to govern. Thus the well-governed state is always rich; and the ill-governed state is always poor."[1]

Now Kwangtze is satisfied with this general principle. He is too practical, however, not to make plans to carry it into execution. In fact, many chapters in his book are devoted to that purpose. The ruler is advised to watch the changes of climate,[2] to conserve the natural resources of the state,[3] to construct systems of irrigation,[4] and to pay particular attention to the promotion of agriculture, which was the chief occupation of his time. Moreover, in order to encourage efficient production, Kwangtze ingeniously contrives a rather peculiar theory

[1] Chap. 48.
[2] Chap. 1, 57, etc.
[3] Chap. 4.
[4] Chap. 4.

which may be called the doctrine of hereditary occupation. He divides the people, according to their professions for the most part, into four classes: scholars, farmers, mechanics, and merchants. The members of each of these four groups, so he plans, are to live entirely by themselves so that their environment will be harmonious and their children will be brought up in the friendliest atmosphere, enabling them to carry on the works of their fathers all the better. Says Kwangtze:

> "Scholars, farmers, mechanics, and merchants — these four classes are the corner stones of the state. They should not be allowed to dwell together. In that case, their thoughts will be confused and their affairs disarranged." [1]

Speaking about the benefits which can be reaped from their dwelling apart from one another, he continues:

> "Suppose now the scholars are living all together around the schools of the districts. Then the fathers will converse with one another about how to teach. The sons will converse with one another about how to be filial. Those who serve the king will converse about reverence. The elders will converse about kindness. The young will converse about obedience. Morning and evening, they will pursue these things in order to bring up their children. Accustomed to such teachings in the course of time, their minds adapted gradually to the atmosphere, the children will become learned without effort. Thus the sons of scholars generally become scholars." [2]

[1] Chap. 20.
[2] *Ibid.*

Perhaps the scholars may not be called a very productive class. But the plan is applied also to farmers, mechanics, and merchants alike. And in all cases the fundamental aim is to secure efficiency in their respective professions.

In addition, Kwangtze advocates a system which divides the people into various ranks and assigns to them diverse emoluments, and which tends towards a close supervision of their personal conduct. It is stated in the book:

> "Habiliments are regulated according to rank. Expenditures are regulated according to emolument. There are rules regarding the amount of victuals and drink, the size of houses, the number of cattle and servants, the various kinds of carriages and decoration that are allowed to different classes of persons. In life there are the diverse grades of hats, clothing, positions, emoluments, houses, and estates. After death, there are also differences in coffins, shrouds, tombs, etc. Though a person may be virtuous, he may not wear the designated habiliments of a higher rank. Though he may be rich, he may not incur greater expenditures than his grade of emolument allows. The ordinary people may not wear colors; craftsmen and tradesmen may not wear long hair; convicts and criminals may not wear cloth and ride in carriages."[1]

At first glance, this system of close supervision of popular conduct may appear directly contradictory to Kwangtze's general trend of thought. But upon close examination we find that he has a sufficiently deep insight into human nature to warrant the contrivance of such a scheme. Just as Napoleon once remarked that insignificant ribbons of distinction have tremendous uses, so Kwangtze prescribed these different grades of

[1] Chap. 4.

rank and emolument in order to give the people an incentive to work, in other words, to be efficient. This may be illustrated by one of his summary statements: "Those who are too rich are averse to employment. Those who are too poor lack the sense of shame."[1] His aim, therefore, is to wield those regulations as weapons to curb the pride of the rich and to goad the lethargy of the poor. He wishes the rich to know that without proper rank they may not even enjoy their own wealth. He also desires the poor to understand that by hard work they may climb to better fortunes. Thus he wants to control the entire wealth of the state in order to further this one aim of his: efficiency.

Moreover, he has another explanation for this system of gradation of the people. Though he may appear somewhat state socialistic, he is decidedly not communistic. He believes that each man should be given what he deserves; and that it is only by doing so that good government and efficiency may be secured. "Government," says he, "is that whereby justice is distributed. If positions are given to deserving persons, the people will not murmur. If the people do not murmur, there will not be confusion. . . . Thus, not everybody in the state may be ennobled. If all are ennobled, the affair will be miscarried, and the state will be damaged."[2]

[1] Chap. 15.
[2] Chap. 5.

Again,

> "All those who shepherd the people, in awarding people emoluments according to what they deserve, must be very careful. Those who deserve much should be given much. Those who deserve little should be given little. If there are any who are deserving and yet are given nothing, the people will be estranged. If there are any who deserve much and yet are given little, the people will not apply faithfully to labor. If there are any who deserve little and yet are given much, the people will take to falsehood. If there are any who are undeserving and yet are given emolument, the people will think more of luck than of work." [1]

So throughout this theorizing, Kwangtze's mind is entirely fixed upon one subject—to make every person in his state work as much as possible in order to benefit both the state and himself.

While Kwangtze endeavors thus to enrich his people on the whole, he is also eager to show his subjects that he entertains for them a more tender concern. As he believes that it is only by indulging and felicitating the people that they learn to toil and worry for their superiors, he displays a particular regard for the feeble and the poor among his flock, by way of example. In this respect, his ideas are not unlike the state-socialistic practices of "The Constitution of Chow." And perhaps, as an ethical basis may be discovered here, they are also tinged a little with the Confucian philosophy. Says Kwangtze:

> "Nine benevolences should be distributed among the people: The first is to nourish the aged. The second is

[1] Chap. 3.

to bring up the young. The third is to take charge of the orphans. The fourth is to nurse the defective. The fifth is to unite single persons. The sixth is to comfort the sick. The seventh is to assist the poor. The eighth is to regenerate the malefactor. The ninth is to pension the kindred of those who have died for the state."[1]

An instance may be given here to illustrate the execution of these principles. In regard to the nourishing of the aged Kwangtze provides:

"In every city there shall be a special officer taking charge of the aged. For one who is above seventy, one of his sons shall be exempt from taxation, and in every three months he shall be given meat by the state. For one who is above eighty, two of his sons shall be exempt from taxation, and in every month he shall be given meat. For one who is above ninety, his entire family shall be exempt from taxation, and every day he shall be given meat. When he dies, his coffin shall be supplied by the state. While he lives, his children shall be urged to offer him good food. He shall be asked about what he desires; he shall be given what he likes. This is called the nourishment of the aged."[2]

Certainly such a display of personal concern on the part of the government for the welfare of its people is well-calculated to earn a return of gratitude.

All the schemes above, however, are only groundwork for the final structure of Kwangtze's attempt to build a tower of efficiency. The people are made rich so that they are easier to govern. The ranks are established so that the people may be more amenable. The state-socialistic policies are practiced so that the subjects may warm towards

[1] Chap. 54.
[2] Chap. 45.

their superiors. All these things are conducive to efficiency, but do not make it. There is only one thing that makes for efficiency; and that is law.

To Kwangtze law is, as to the other legalists, a very comprehensive term. It embraces almost all the regulations within the state—its constitution, its commands and statutes, its codes of punishments and rewards. In the words of Kwangtze, it is all that "whereby the people are governed and the nation is made one."[1] It is derived from the sovereign who is its only source. It is administered by the ministers. It is enacted to be observed by the people.[2] It is the keynote of efficiency. For it is only when the whole nation follows the law that Kwangtze considers the state well-governed.[3]

Such being the importance of law, it is therefore of supreme interest to the ruler to see to it that it be rigidly enforced and that no outside influence be allowed to interfere with its legitimate sway. Declares Kwangtze:

> "There are two things which intelligent kings practice in constancy. The first is to make the law clear and keep it tenaciously. The second is to suppress private tendencies to violate it."[4]

These, then, are the two fundamental canons of Kwangtze's theory of law. From the former emerge four principles. In order to make the

[1] Chap, 45.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*

law clear, it must be given, first of all, a character of permanence. It should be "as steady as the Heaven and the Earth, and as constant as the stars in the firmament."[1] Once it is established, it should not be changed at will even by the sovereign himself. For if the law be at the mercy of his whims, how can the people make certain what the law is? Thus says Kwangtze:

> "Like the heart in the body is the sovereign's position. Like the functions of the limbs are the ministers' duties. If the heart is orderly, the limbs will follow its example . . . Otherwise, as the superior leaves the regular way, so the inferiors will neglect their affairs."[2]

If the sovereign wishes to have his people obey the law, then he must be the first of all to render it due obedience. Clarity of law can only be gained through permanence; and permanence only obtained through constancy.

From the concept of the permanence of law, naturally flows another idea; the coördination of law. If the law is self-contradictory, how will it be possible for the people to regard it with respect? In such an event, the dignity of the law will be impaired, the faith of the people will be divided, and inefficiency will be the ultimate result. Hence, affirms Kwangtze:

> "If the sovereign makes his laws coördinate, then the hundreds of officers will observe the law. . . . If the sovereign does not make his laws coördinate, then there will be many among his subjects to commit violations of the law for their own selfish interests."[3]

[1] Chap. 45.
[2] Chap. 36.
[3] Chap. 16.

Third, the law must be just. In order that the law may be made easy to enforce, Kwangtze reasons, its justice must be made so clear to the people that they cannot violate it without acting against their own sense of propriety. Thus the law should be such as to be "neither overcome by the strong, nor corrupted by the rich, nor seduced by the beautiful."[1] In such a case, the benefits will be twofold. In the first place, if rewards are given, they will not arouse any rivalry or jealousy. For where each one is awarded his due according to the definite provisions of a just law, there can hardly be any cause for contention.[2] In the second place, if any punishment is inflicted, it will not excite any discontent. For if a man suffers justly for his own acts, he cannot have anybody but himself to blame.[3] In short, what Kwangtze wants is similiar to the principle of the equality of law. He desires to have the law as just as the wind and rain which blow and shower upon all classes of people alike.[4]

The last of the four principles that govern the making of law pertains to its enforcement. This is another sequence to his general principle of "placing the state in a position where it is impossible for it to totter." It argues that if it is desired to enforce a law, then from the very beginning the law must be so constituted as to be

[1] Chap. 45.
[2] Chap. 46.
[3] Chap. 64.
[4] *Ibid.*

enforceable. Thus, the sovereign should always take pains to calculate what can be required from his people and what cannot. If he only exacts the fulfillment of those things which are within the strength of the people to fulfill, his wishes will be satisfied. If not, his exactions will only be courting the opposition of the people. Says Kwangtze:

> "The sovereign must gain what he seeks, must stop what he prohibits, and must enforce what he commands. But if he seeks too much, he is liable to gain little. If he prohibits too much, he is liable to stop little. If he commands too much, he is liable to enforce too little. When what is sought by him is not gained, then his majesty dwindles. When what is prohibited by him is not stopped, laws will be broken. When what is commanded by him is not enforced, inferiors become prone to insult their superiors." [1]

All the principles are, therefore, directed toward one goal: to make the law supreme within the state, and to make the government a paragon of efficiency. This being so, it cannot but be expected that Kwangtze is extremely intolerant of any view different from that of the government. Kwangtze declares:

> "In ancient times, the sages, in governing the people, did not value those who were widely informed but those who could be harmonious, coöperative, and obedient to commands. In the Great Declaration of King Wu, it is said that the king of Shang had a *milliard* men, but also a *milliard* hearts; while king Wu had only three thousand men, but one heart. Thus the king of Shang with his *milliard* hearts was the vanquished; while King Wu with

[1] Chap. 16.

his one heart came out the victor. So if the ruler of a state cannot unite the people's hearts, centralize the nation's strength, standardize public opinion, and make the government an example for the inferiors to follow, though extensive may be his domain and numerous his subjects, he cannot be said to be in safety."[1]

With this in mind, Kwangtze announces his second canon of law. That is, all private tendencies to violate the law should be suppressed. This he proposes to accomplish in two ways. First, he forbids any discussion and criticism of law on the part of the people, and any innovation of new ideas by sporadic persons. In one place, he says:

"Those who neither obey the commands of the sovereign nor harmonize with the people of his district, but follow their own inclinations and violate the laws and customs of the country shall be called the people who cannot be shepherded. The people who cannot be shepherded are outside the law. For those who are outside the law, the penalty is death."[2]

Again, he states:

"When an intelligent king is on the throne no one dares to establish private opinions or prize himself. Before him, broken are those who are too strong, dulled are those who are too sharp, and made to yield are those who are too stubborn. Regulated by law and corrected by punishment, the heart of the multitude is subjugated and obedient. It moves when its superior pushes; it comes when its superior pulls.

If, however, there is among the inferiors any person who dares to establish his private opinion, to vaunt himself, and who is engaged in quarrelsome contentions, then laws

[1] Chap. 14.
[2] Chap. 16.

will not be enforced. Thus it is said, 'Degraded is the way of the sovereign, when private opinions are established.'"[1]

Yet, though Kwangtze is intolerant of private opinions, he cannot be spoken of as being unresponsive to public welfare. To do him justice, we must recall his fundamental principle of efficiency. He has insisted that government can only be efficient when in accordance with human nature. He has also warned the rulers to be careful to enact only those laws which are within the power of the people to obey. From these points, it is clear that Kwangtze is not averse to public opinion. How then shall we reconcile that with this later idea, of his, that private discussions of law must be suppressed? The link between the two is found in the element of time. Before the law is made, Kwangtze advises that the government conform to the desires of the people in the making of it. But once the law is made, he demands complete obedience on the part of the people and demands that no rival opinions be established. Thus, though his attitude changes with the course of time, his aim is always the same—to secure efficiency of government.

In the second place, as a means of suppressing private tendencies to violation of his law, Kwangtze proposes the infliction of heavy punishments. Speaking of the commands of the sovereign, which

[1] Chap. 16.

in ancient times constituted a great part of what was called law, Kwangtze declared:

> "Of all the importment things which a sovereign, or a state, can have, nothing is so important as the commands. The importance of the commands is related to the dignity of the sovereign. The dignity of the sovereign is related to the safety of the state. Thus, in order to make the state safe, it is necessary to guard the dignity of the sovereign. In order to guard the dignity of the sovereign, it is necessary to enforce the commands. In order to enfore the commands, it is necessary to make punishments heavy. When punishments are heavy, the people will be afraid and the commands will be enforced. When punishments are light, the people will feel at ease and the commands will be neglected."[1]

This is only a logical sequence to what has gone before. Since even private discussions of law are strictly forbidden, naturally woe betide those who dare to violate it.

Thus is completed Kwangtze's theory of law. It does not need any comment to bring out the fact that it is entirely dedicated to the god of efficiency. He makes the law clear, permanent, coördinate, just, and certain so that it will be easy for the people to follow. He suppresses private criticisms and establishes heavy punishments so that none dare to venture. In his own words, his ideal goal is this: "To do is to succeed, to seek is to gain."

Now, after having examined all the theories and contrivances of Kwangtze to secure efficiency, we may perhaps be allowed to ask a very

[1] Chap. 16.

innocent question. What is this efficiency for? It is the greatest defect in the book of Kwangtze that the question has never been fully and satisfactorily answered. Throughout the book we find no definite statement in that regard; and so we are thrown upon the resource of such hints as we find here and there, and as seem to indicate a possible reply to the inquiry.

Since the only important doctrine besides the canon of efficiency in Kwangtze's political theory, is his concept of an ethical basis for the state, If there is any ultimate aim behind his desire for efficiency at all, it can only be ethical in nature. In one place he says:

> "To govern means to rectify. To rectify is to fix and correct the nature of everything. Therefore, the sage cultivates his own virtues and keeps to moderation in order to create a correct standard. He then makes clear the correct standard in order to govern the nation."[1]

This statement almost reaches the core of Confucian philosophy. So it does appear that Kwangtze has some ethical purpose in view, Moveover, he continues with this affirmation: "To employ only courage and not calculation is to injure the army; to employ only benevolence and not law is to injure the correct standard."[2] According to this, law seems to be used as a prop to support the correct standard; and the correct standard, as we have already explained, is based

[1] Chap. 16.
[2] *Ibid.*

upon ethics. Therefore, this may be regarded as a proper and a probable link between his two principles: efficiency and the ethical basis of the state. The former is employed to achieve the latter.

This is supported by other evidence. Unlike some legalists, Kwangtze does not approve of conquest by war. Says he:

> "There are three classes of states: those which subjugate others, those which are subjugated by others, and those which can neither subjugate nor be subjugated. How do I know? Eminent for virtue, reputed for justice, and yet shy of oppressing others by its own name; its population large, its army powerful, and yet reluctant to arouse strife; willing to keep itself in the background while the world is torn by war—such is the type of state that subjugates others. Neither eminent in virtue, nor reputed for justice, but prone to oppress others by its own name; having neither a large population nor a powerful army, but ever seeking to arouse strife; dependent upon its allies and envious of vainglory and fortune—such is the type of state that is subjugated by others. Advancing as others advance, retreating as others retreat, fatigued as others are fatigued, satisfied as others are satisfied, always keeping in balance with others—such is the type of state which can neither subjugate nor be subjugated."[1]

From this remark alone, it does seem that Kwangtze is more inclined towards the ancient theory of conquest by virtue. Efficiency seems not so prominent now as it has looked to us all along; and ethics wax larger and broader in his political theory than ever before.

But still these speculations about a possible ethical end for his concept of efficiency are based

[1] Chap. 12.

upon no more than sporadic hints. No sooner are they made in the book than they are whirled away into another storm of discussion about law and efficiency. Anyone who can read the writing in his original language cannot but be impressed with his unsatisfactory way of treating the subject. Take Kwangtze's idea of war, for instance. According to the passage we have just quoted, ethics looms larger than efficiency. But according to other statements, which are abundant, the contrary proves to be much more his real opinion. True, he does not show any particular liking for war. But that conclusion seems to have been reached by him more from the principle of efficiency than from the principal of ethics. Observes he:

> "Frequent wars fatigue the nation; frequent victories excite the sovereign. Now, with a fatigued people employed by an excited sovereign, how can the state be safe from danger? Thus the best-governed state seldom goes to war." [1]

Again,

> "The way of using military force lies in the accumulation of wealth, so that the wealth of the state has no peer. It lies in the training of craftsmen, so that the craftsmen of the state have no peers. It lies in the construction of weapons, so that the weapons of the state have no peers. It lies in the choice of officers, so that the officers of the state have no peers. It lies in the government and education of the state, so that the government and education of the state have no peers. It lies in the promotion of the material welfare of the people; so that the material welfare of the people have no peers. It lies in the

[1] Chap. 17.

knowledge of the world on the part of the state, so that its knowledge has no peers. It lies in the insight into the ways and means of things, so that insight has no peers. Thus, before the army leaves the boundary of the state, there are already eight things in which it has no peers."[1]

So Kwangtze is not opposed, from an ethical point of view, to the use of force. He is only antagonistic to an inefficient employment of force. Following his old principle of "placing the state in a position where it is impossible for it to totter," he desires to build an army so powerful that no war is needed to intimidate and subjugate other states. Such a standpoint is certainly far from being strictly ethical.

Thus, in conclusion, we may say that in Kwangtze's political scheme, like that of other legalists, there is only one very prominent efficiency. At the beginning in spite of his conception of an ethical basis for the state he, later, is swept away by his own enthusiasm for efficiency into the school of legalists. Although now and then in his system we find an undercurrent of ethical principles, he never essays to carry them to such an extent as to be the dominant note of his state. They are sufficient to make his difference from other legalists; but they are not sufficient to draw him away from legalism. In short, what he views is only the present. What he seeks is only efficiency. To achieve that aim, he is willing to employ everything. He borrows

[1] Chap. 6.

from ethics its moral strength. He coaxes the people into obedience. He makes his sovereign supreme, his government omnipotent, and his laws as certain as the stars of the firmament. It may be said of him, if it may be said of anybody, that he desires efficiency for efficiency's own sake.

CHAPTER VII

SHANG YANG

OF all the ancient Chinese political theorists, Shang-Yang is the most systematic. Of all the advocates of legalism, he is the most orthodox. Despite his extremely materialistic attitude which tends to regard all human beings as mere mechanical tools for use, and despite the existence in his theories of an unmistakable quality of brutality, which is almost skin to devilishness, there is such originality in his thought and such practicability in his schemes that we cannot but allot to him a most dazzling place in the galaxy of Chinese political philosophers.

The life of Shang Yang is illustrative of his thought. In both there is the same ruthless fight for success and power, the same inhuman unscrupulousness and harshness, the same striking and rather romantic beginning, the same dreadful and tragic end. A scion of the ruling family of a small state, he early entered the services of a more powerful neighbor, Wei, and became assistant to the prime minister of that state. Wei was so struck with Shang Yang's ability that on his deathbed he conjured his king either to appoint the young man to the place which he was about to vacate, or to put to death the budding genius lest his unusual talents find

employment elsewhere to the detriment of Wei. It was due to the king's neglect, which was to prove later his sore grief, that Shang Yang entered the services of Duke Hsiao of Ch'in, in about 350 B.C. There the fire of his genius began to spread. He inspired his new master with an insatiable ambition. He showed him that not beyond his reach was the coveted imperial throne of the fallen Chow dynasty. He introduced for him radical reforms, and made a new code of laws whose chief feature was relentless severity and whose only aim was the attainment of wealth and power for the state. In short, it may be said that it was Shang Yang alone who started the dukedom of Ch'in upon a path of expansion and conquest, and laid the foundation for the final triumph of the so-called First Emperor.

Unscrupulous and self-willed, while Duke Hsiao lived, Shang Yang exercised supreme power in the state. Inside the dukedom, when the heir apparent committed a breach of his laws, Shang Yang dared even to punish and brand his guardian and tutor for failing to keep their young charge within the limits of his duty. Outside, Shang Yang invaded and crippled the state which he had first served, seized its commander, who was a quondam friend of his, by sheer treachery, and compelled it to cede a large slice of territory in order to ennoble himself as the Prince of Shang. Thus the seeds of hatred were sown, and he was soon obliged to reap the harvest. In 338 B. C., Duke Hsiao died

and the heir apparent succeeded. The furies of the past were set loose, and Shang Yang was compelled to flee for his life to the state of Wei. But there the injury he had done to it was still fresh in the memory of its people, and he was driven back again to the country whence he had just fled. It was on this occasion that he was caused to taste the bitterness and severity of his own laws. He was refused shelter in an inn because, as the innkeeper pointed out, he had not, in accordance with his own prescriptions, provided himself with a passport. A little later he was caught and put to a terrible death.[1] Thus ended the career of a genius, as pitiful as it was meteoric.

Now, let us turn to his philosophy. As we have hinted above, it is no less stirring than his life. It is based entirely upon expediency and force. It is in sharp opposition, not only to the theories of Laotze and Chwangtze, but also to those of Confucius and Micius, who preach the doctrines of benevolence and mutual love and whose chief object of abhorrence is unjust war and unnecessary bloodshed. Even among the legalists themselves, Shang Yang stands alone. He is different from Kwangtze because there is never any ethical element in his theory. He is different from Han Fei because his is decidedly a more inventive and original genius. Above all,

[1] "The Records of History."

he is the most consistent and systematic of all the ancient Chinese political theorists. Starting from his peculiar point of view, he carries his own principles to such conclusions and with such facility that, though one may not agree with him at the beginning, one is obliged to acknowledge his logic at the end. It may truly be said of him, as it has been said of Hobbes, that once we admit his premises, then we cannot but swallow everything that flows from his forceful pen.

What are the premises of Shang Yang then? This may be revealed in his debate with another advisor to Duke Hsiao, in connection with his proposal to change the laws of Ch'in:

> "Argued Kang Lung, 'No. I have heard that sages do not change the people in order to teach them, and wise men do not alter the laws in order to conduct the government. If you teach people just as they are, success may be gained without effort. If you conduct the government in accordance with established laws, the officers are accustomed to them and the people will feel content. . . .'
>
> Said Shang Yang: 'What you have spoken is but what the vulgar people have thought. Now, the common people are always satisfied with what they are accustomed to, and scholars are always biased by what they have learned. These two kinds of men are the only ones qualified to receive appointments and to observe the laws, but are not fit to discuss what lies beyond the laws. The three dynasties attained their respective imperial dignities by different ceremonies (li). The five leaders achieved their leadership by different laws. Thus it is the wise who make laws and the stupid who are controlled by them; the virtuous who alter the ceremonies, and the commonplace who are governed by them. Those who are governed by ceremonies are not qualified to deliberate upon affairs.

Those who are controlled by laws are not qualified to discuss changes." [1]

Thus Shang Yang believes in the principle which may be described as autocratic lawmaking. It is for the chosen of the people to make laws to suit the times and circumstances. It is for him to shape the masses according to his own desires. In a favorable sense, he may be compared with a god who ordains everything for the good of humanity without its knowledge. In an unfavorable sense, he may be likened to a butcher who attends to his cattle only for his own advantage. Continues Shang Yang:

"Those who contemplate the highest attainments are not conformable to the vulgar. Those who achieve great successes do not consult the masses. Ceremonies are established for the welfare of the people. Laws are promulgated for the expediency of affairs. Thus wise men will not keep to old laws, if the state may be strengthened by new ones; and will not follow antiquated ceremonies, if the people may be benefitted by other measures." [2]

Expediency is, therefore, the keynote of Shang Yang's philosophy. Like Kwangtze, and yet more radical than Kwangtze by far, he will stop at nothing to gain his end. He will adapt his laws to circumstances; but what is more, he will even mold circumstances to accord with his laws. He will enact regulations according to human nature; but what is more, he will alter human nature in order to achieve his ends.

[1] Chap. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*

What are his ends? He is not an idealist who cherishes chimeras, but a practical statesman who takes the world as he finds it. He believes that the purposes of a state can be found only after two things have been carefully investigated. Says he:

> "The sage, in governing a state, surveys the tendencies of the age and studies the sources of state affairs in order to formulate his laws. If the laws are formulated without a survey of the tendencies of the age and without a study of the sources of state affairs, it will be conducive to confusion, waste of effort, and comparatively little success."[1]

What is the result of his investigation of the tendencies of his age? He finds that all the tendencies are governed by one thing: force.

> "The reason why a state is respected and why a sovereign is revered is this—force."[2]

Moreover, he discovers that force is the only possible weapon by means of which the whole empire may be subjugated in his own time. Says he:

> "When the people were simple-minded, the one who had wisdom could make himself emperor. When the times are permeated with wisdom, then he who has force can make himself emperor."[3]
>
> "The sage cannot employ what is easy for the people, to subjugate what is difficult for them. He must employ what is difficult for the people, to subjugate what is easy for them. Thus, when the people are simple, they can be subjugated by wisdom. When the people are wise, they can be subjugated by force. When the people are simple,

[1] Chap. 1.
[2] Chap. 25.
[3] Chap. 7.

they consider force easy and wisdom difficult. When the people are wise, they consider wisdom easy and force difficult. Hence, Hwangti taught the people farming, and became the emperor of the known world because he was revered as a teacher by the people; while King Tang and King Wu made themselves pursuant and subjugated all the feudal lords because they were feared for their force. Now, the times are wise and the people are crafty. Because they do not imitate the ways of King Tang and King Wu, but practice the principles of Hwangti — that is why the states are in disorder." [1]

So, it is entirely upon force that the existence and prosperity of a state depends. Adds Shang Yang tersely:

"To conquer the empire without a victory, and to be overthrown without a defeat — such things have never been heard of since the beginning of the world." [2]

All these explosions are chiefly for the purpose of undermining the contentions of Confucius and Micius, that love and benevolence, wisdom and virtue are the fundamental means for subjugating the people. Without batting an eye, Shang Yang charges them with anachronism, and announces that such things as love and wisdom are entirely out of date. The place of Saturn has already been taken by Jupiter; and the sole claim of the latter to the heavenly throne is written on his thunderbolt.

The same trend of thought is exhibited by Shang Yang in his investigation of the sources of state affairs. In order to penetrate to the root

[1] Chap. 6.
[2] Chap. 18.

of the matter, he goes into a discussion of the origin of a state:

"After Heaven and Earth had been established, birth was given to men. At that time, men only knew their mothers and not their fathers. Their way of living was to attach themselves to their kindred and to desire private possessions. As they attached themselves respectively to their kindred, they were divided into groups. As they desired private possessions, they were a risky sort. When they became populous and were bent upon division and riskiness, confusion became the order of the day. At that time, men strove for victory and laboured for conquest. Striving for victory led to struggles, and laboring for conquest led to disputes. When there were disputes and nobody to rectify them, the nature of the people could not attain to full development.

"Thus, the virtuous among the people erected correct standards, promulgated principles of unselfishness and taught the people to love benevolence. At that time, the people no longer attached themselves to their kindred, but venerated the virtuous. So all the benevolent men made love their aim, and all the virtuous men tried to excel one another in simplicity. But gradually, when people became more numerous, and no check was laid upon them while they tried to excel one another, confusion again came.

"So the sages appeared on the stage to remedy the situation. They marked the differences in sex, in land, and in wealth. As it was impossible to have differences and not to have restrictions, they established laws. Again, as it was impossible to have laws and not to have some one to enforce them, they established officers. Then, as it was also impossible to have officers and not to have some one centralize them, they established the sovereign. After the sovereign had been established, the principle of venerating the virtuous was given up and substituted by the principle of reverencing the noble."

"So it is that in ancient times the people attached themselves to their kindred and desired private possessions, that in medieval times the people venerated the virtuous and loved benevolence, and that in modern times the people reverence the noble and respect the officers. Those who venerated virtue attempted to excel one another; but

those who established the sovereign had no use for the virtuous. Those who attached themselves to their kindred attempted to be harmonious with one another; but those who erected correct standards had no use for harmony. These three did not act purposely in contradiction to one another; but human nature has varied and what was once considered important is no longer considered so. Times have changed and the guiding principle of the age has changed, too." [1]

Such, then, are Shang Yang's findings in his investigation of the sources of a state. He discovers that it is based, not upon the people's veneration of virtue, but upon their reverence for rank and position. He finds that the thing which secures peace and efficiency for state affairs is not love or benevolence, but law. In short, this is but a continuation of his force theory. Force is the foundation of the state, and law is the expression of force.

Having examined these premises of Shang Yang, we are prepared to discuss his theories of law. But before we enter into a description of the ends which he has designated for law in accordance with his investigations, it is profitable for us to analyze first his conceptions of law—that is, what law can do and should be. Law, according to him, is the means by which a sense of propriety may be given to the people, security may be rendered to the sovereign's position, and peace and government may be guaranteed to the state. How are the people given a sense of propriety by

[1] Chap. 7.

law? Shang Yang replies to this question with a parable which is in vogue among the legalists of the time:

> "A rabbit runs in the field and a hundred men give it chase. But in the market there are a great number of rabbits, and yet none dare to seize any. What is the reason? Because the character of the rabbits in the market has already been decided."[1]

By what means is their character decided? It is by law. Law defines whose property these rabbits are, prescribes penalties for anyone who dares to rob the lawful owners, and provides means to enforce its decrees. Men fear the punishment of law, take pains not to carry away those rabbits at will, and so are given a sense of propriety. Thus reaffirms Shang Yang:

> "Those who are called the teachers of the people are so called because they determine the characters of things. When characters of things are determined, even the deceitful will become trustful; and all the people will become simple-hearted and behave themselves well."[2]

Now we come to the second phase of law. How is it possible for law to give security to the position of the sovereign? Explains Shang Yang:

> "The virtue of a king does not necessarily excel the virtue of others; nor does his wisdom; nor does his physical strength. But why is it that even though there are many wise men among the people, they dare not make designs against the king; that even though there are many brave men, they dare not attempt to put the king to

[1] See "Shan Tao" and "Yüan Wen," Chap. 26.
[2] *Ibid.*

death; that oven though the people are so populous, they dare not subjugate their master; and that even though their number reaches a billiard and a billiard, yet, when the king grants a reward, none dare to contend, and when he inflicts a punishment, none dare to resent? Why is it? It is because of law."[1]

So we go back to his two fundamental theories again. On the one hand, law gives security to the position of the sovereign because it represents the supreme force in the state. On the other, law gives a sense of propriety to the people because it is able to regulate and adjudicate the differences between the people. Hence, through law alone it is that peace and government may be guaranteed to a state.

All these are what law can do. But there are also many things that law should be. In the first place, it should possess a permanent character. Here, like Kwangtze, Shang Yang asks the question whether the sovereign should be allowed to change the law at will. There is no doubt that Shang Yang believes that the sovereign is the source of law, assertions to this effect having been made repeatedly by him in the foregoing quotations. There is also certainty that Shang Yang has a clear conception of what the Western political theorists call "sovereignty," an evidence of which may be found below:

"The reasons why a nation is well governed are three: The first is law. The second is sincerity. The third is power. Law may be enforced by the sovereign and the

[1] Chap. 18.

people alike. Sincerity may be established by the sovereign and the people alike. But power must be maintained by the sovereign alone." [1]

But, despite the fact that the sovereign holds the supreme power of the state, again like Kwangtze, Shang Yang believes that once the law has been established, for efficiency's sake it is necessary for even the sovereign to render homage to law. Thus he says:

"When the sovereign loses his position, he dies. When the sovereign and the ministers put aside law and follow their own selfish inclinations, confusion instantly appears. Hence, the way to good government is to establish law in order to define the characters of things and not to let selfish inclinations injure it; and the way to give a sovereign majesty is to hold power alone. As the people believe in the certainty of reward, so the affairs of the sovereign will thrive. As the people believe in the certainty of punishment, so evil finds no outlet. Thus intelligent kings never fail to value power, prize certainty, and do not allow selfish inclinations to injure law." [2]

Nor is it for efficiency alone that a sovereign should hold on to his law tenaciously. For it is upon law, also, that his own position depends. It is to his ability to restore order and maintain peace, that he owes his great place. Now, if law is violated and confusion again reigns, will not the people inquire what the use is of having a sovereign?

"In ancient times, the people were born promiscuously and lived together in groups. There was confusion. So they desired to have a superior. Thus, that the people

[1] Chap. 14.
[2] *Ibid.*

desired to have a superior, was only for the attainment of good government. Now, if there be a sovereign and no law, as much injury to the people will accrue as if there had been no sovereign at all. If there be a law but the law be constantly injured, evil will be as great as when there had been no law at all."[1]

Thus the enforcement of law is a necessity to Shang Yang's system. In order to secure such a result, in addition to making the law permanent to a certain extent, he advocates that the law be made clear to the people. Says Shang Yang, describing his aims:

"In the whole country, every officer and every subject should know what the law is. As the officers know clearly that the people are well acquainted with the law, they dare not deceive the people. As the people know clearly that the officers are well acquainted with the law, they dare not affront the officers."[2]

This last idea he expands further:

"If it takes a wise man to understand an idea then it should not be made law: not everybody is wise. If it takes a virtuous man to understand it, than it should not be made law: not everybody is virtuous. Thus, the sages, in making laws, never fail to make them simple, clear, and easy to understand, so that all the people, stupid as well as wise, virtuous as well as base, cannot miss their meaning. . . .

"Thus, when the sage occupies the high place, there is not a single case of punishment or execution. It is not because he does not inflict punishments or put men to death, but because he promulgates laws which are simple, clear, and easy to understand, and establishes legal officers to teach the people what the laws are, so that the myriad

[1] Chap. 7.
[2] Chap. 26.

subjects know what to avoid and what to pursue, and all behave themselves well." [1]

The third principle regarding the enforcement of law is certainty, or, in the word of Shang Yang, "sincerity." That is, the sovereign must make it a rule never to fail the prescriptions of law. If the law provides rewards in certain cases, the rewards must be duly awarded whenever such a case arises. If the law prescribes punishment for certain crimes, condign punishment must be inflicted whenever such a crime is committed. The latter has already been illustrated by Shang Yang's punishing the tutor and the guardian of the heir apparent. As for the former, it may be instanced by one of his earliest acts. Before he proclaimed his new code to the people of Ch'in, he resorted to the following device to show his "sincerity." He issued a notice that anyone who could carry a certain wooden pole of light weight from the market place to one of the city gates would receive ten ounces of silver, a considerable fortune at the time. At first, the people refused to believe his words, and no one moved. So he increased his offer from ten to fifty; and when at length a man came forth and performed the feat, to the amazement of all, the promised reward was promptly given him.[2] The principle of this is self-evident. It is to instill into the people a

[1] Chap. 26.
[2] "The Records of History — Biography of Shang Yang."

spirit of unbounded confidence in their government.

The whole political philosophy of Shang Yang thus far is not unlike that of Kwangtze. He has the same desire for efficiency. His law is also forged out of the metal of the circumstances of his times. In enforcing law, he too, advocates the principles of permanence, clarity, and certainty. In fact, one cannot help recalling Kwangtze's famous principle of "placing the state in a position where it is impossible to totter," when one reads the following passage in which Shang Yang, while making a grimace at the Confucian philosophy, summarizes his ideas thus far:

"The sage knows the infallible reason and the inevitable circumstance, and hence conducts the government which cannot but govern well, fights with soldiers who cannot but be brave, and enforces commands that cannot but be obeyed. Thus, wherever his army goes, it is peerless; wherever his command is given, it is carried into execution. . . . The sage sees the very foundation of government and knows the reason that must be right. Hence, he regulates the people as he regulates water, by elevation and depression, and fire, by dryness and humidity.

"Thus I say: The benevolent may be benevolent to others, but may not make others benevolent. The just may be just to others, but may not make others just. Therefore, I know that benevolence and justice are not sufficient to govern the world.

"The sage is different. He has a character that cannot but be believed. He has also the law that cannot but make the world believe in him.

"What has been called justice is simply this: to be a faithful subject; to be a filial son; to observe the ceremonies (li) between the elders and the young and the differences between men and women. But that is not what I desire.

"What I desire is this: A man would rather starve than gain food improperly. A man would rather die than live improperly. That is the normal condition under the regulation of law.

"Therefore, the wise kings do not value justice, but value law. What they want is nothing but that law be clear and that their commands be enforced." [1]

So this is somewhat like Kwangtze's theory. And yet it is not entirely so. Here we have something that seems to be far more striking and thorough. In the first place, the element of force plays a far more important part than in Kwangtze's philosophy. In the second place, we have not such a half-hearted doctrine as "efficiency for efficiency's sake," but, instead, a great dynamic purpose behind all this ruthless efficiency. What is it then? In reply, we come at last to a discussion of the ends that Shang Yang has designed for his law.

First, law, according to Shang Yang, is to do what the people dislike.

"When the government does what the people dislike, the people are weak. When the government does what the people like, the people are strong." [2]

Now, to Shang Yang, it is a fundamental principle that the people must be kept weak—certainly not before the enemy, but before their own government. For when the people are weak before the government, laws are easy to enforce. When they are recalcitrant, laws are not. Shang

[1] Chap. 18.
[2] Chap. 7.

Yang explains further, as he casts another aspersion at the Confucian doctrine of justice:

> "Now-a-days those are called just who establish what the people like and discard what the people dislike; and those are called unjust who establish what the people dislike and discard what the people like. But the respective substances of the two do not agree with their names; and we must take pains to investigate. When what the people like is established, the people will hate all the more what they dislike. When what the people dislike is established, the people will be content with what they like. How do I know? When the people are worried, they become thoughtful. When they are thoughtful, they act in moderation. On the other hand, when the people are happy, they become excessive. When they are excessive, they indulge themselves in idle pleasures. Thus, if the people are regulated by punishment, the people will be intimidated. When they are intimidated, there will be no malefaction. When there is no malefaction, the people will be content with what they like. But if the people are taught by so-called justice, the people will become indulgent. When they are indulgent, there will be confusion. When there is confusion, the people will hate all the more what they dislike." [1]

But what are the things that the people dislike and that Shang Yang wishes to establish as one of the aims of his government? They are two: farming and fighting. Farming involves toil; and fighting involves danger. Both are disliked by the people; but Shang Yang regards both as essential to the existence of a state.[2]

How then shall Shang Yang proceed to carry this aim into execution? For answer, he falls back upon his original premise that in modern

[1] Chap. 7.
[2] Chaps. 3, 6.

times people revere, honor, and prize position. If the people are of such a nature, may it not be exploited to further his purpose? Thus he calculates:

> "Now, take for instance a bandit. He defies the prohibitions of his sovereign, abandons his duty as a subject, and risks disgrace and danger. Why does he not stop his career for all these? It is because of profit. Then, take a scholar. He is not sufficiently clad to warm his body, nor sufficiently fed with food; he racks his mind and heart, wearies his four limbs, and injures his vitals in order to gain more learning. This is not normal human nature, and yet why does he do it? It is because of fame.
>
> "Therefore, I say: Where fame and profit are centered, there the people will go."[1]

Once realizing this, Shang Yang is not reluctant to exploit his discovery as far as possible. Moreover, he finds every element in the state helpful to his scheme. Men will toil and fight for profit and fame; and it is the sovereign who holds "the handle of profit and fame."[2] Now, if only the sovereign can so plan the government as to make farming and fighting the only path for the people to follow in order to attain to that which their hearts desire, will not the people rush to them in uncontrolable desire?

> "As the people will long for profit while living and desire fame after death, caution must be taken in providing the vent from which fame and profit may emerge. Let profit come only from the fields; and the people will labor to their utmost. Let fame come only from fighting, and the people will dare even death. Inside the state, if

[1] Chap. 6.
[2] *Ibid.*

the people are caused to labor to their utmost in the fields, there will be no exhaustion of resources. Outside the state, if the people are caused to dare even death, victory over enemies will be assured. The national resources being inexhaustible, and victory over the enemy being assured, the attainment of wealth and power is near at hand." [1]

Thus we come to the second aim of law. That is, law must be so used as to hold the people together. But holding people together is perhaps too mild an expression for Shang Yang. What he wants is to concentrate all the forces of the state in one irresistible array. Speaking figuratively, he wishes to shape the state into something like concentrated food, or, to be more exact, into padded dynamite. For his state, there can be no other purpose but to farm and to fight. To that one end all the energy of the state must be directed, and not a jot of waste should be allowed. Such is, then, the second aim of Shang Yang's law; and he has aptly described this doctrine of his by one word: "oneness."

"All the rulers are afraid that the people may be divided and not be held together. Thus the sage establishes "oneness" in order to hold the people together. The state which establishes oneness for a year will be powerful for ten years. That which establishes oneness for ten years will be powerful for a hundred years. That which establishes oneness for a hundred years will be powerful for a thousand years. That which is powerful for a thousand years will conquer the whole empire." [2]

But how is oneness to be established? In discussing the first aim of law, Shang Yang has

[1] Chap. 6.
[2] Chap. 3.

already given us a clue to his trend of thought. Now we need only to harken to him further:

> "The sage, in governing the nation, makes reward one, his code of punishment one, and his policy of education one. When the system of reward is made one, the army of the state will be peerless. When the code of punishment is made one, commands will be enforced. When the policy of education is made one, the inferiors will obey their superiors."[1]

We need not dwell very long upon the oneness of reward and of punishment. It is only an expansion of the idea which we have mentioned above. According to it, rewards — that is, position and emolument, honor and fame — will be awarded only to the people who have shown ability and bravery in fighting.[2] The same doctrine is applied to punishment with some qualifications. As a corollary to this principle, we may mention also that no means is spared to insure that profit will come only from diligent application to farming. All these, however, we shall soon discuss and illustrate in more detail.

Upon the oneness of education, we must now fix our attention. For here it is that Shang Yang aims to deal his most deadly blow at the Confucianists of his time. Not only does he desire to make farming and fighting the only royal road to position and wealth; but he also wants his people to be taught nothing but farming

[1] Chap. 17.
[2] *Ibid.*

and fighting. Hence, he attempts to discourage and restrict the teachings of the Confucian and Mician schools, especially because they advocate a principle directly contradictory to his own.

> "What is called oneness of education is this: Those who are well-informed, clever at argument; preach uprightness and honesty, li and music, cultivate their own persons, group together in order to sing the praises of one another and to differentiate between what they call right and wrong—such people should not be allowed to adjudicate punishments, and should not be permitted to give counsel to their superiors either singly or collectively."[1]

Why is Shang Yang so bitter towards those people? There are two reasons. In the first place, their principles tend toward doing great injury to law. They make law less certain, and they shake the confidence of the people in the government. For instance, they prize virtue and plead for the doctrine of converting people to good. Now, the teaching is lofty in itself, but when applied to law, it necessarily leads to such corollaries as individualization of punishment and a generous distribution of pardons. If these occur, then the path to inefficiency will be opened up. The government is liable to be accused of being either too merciful to one or too grudging to another, of being too lenient to some who are not deserving, and unjust to others who are deserving. Thus the certainty of law will be shaken, and the confidence of the people in their

[1] Chap. 17.

government will be weakened. Furthermore, the Confucianists and Micianists take virtue as the criterion for reward and punishment. Now, virtue is a relative thing. Just how much of it exists in one person it is extremely difficult to decide. On the other hand, if you make realized achievement the sole standard for promotion and relegation, you will have a much more practicable standard. Thus Shang Yang alleges:

> "After the law is determined, it shall not be altered simply because of some lofty counsel. When you use achievement as a criterion, the people will grumble little. When you use virtue as a criterion, the people will grumble much." [1]

Again,

> "Clever dialectics.—that is the herald to confusion. Li and music—that is the indication of indulgence. Love and benevolence—that is the mother of evil. Mutual recommendation—that is the origin of intrigue. When confusion has a herald, it spreads. When indulgence has an indication, it thrives. When evil has a mother, it cannot be arrested. When intrigue has an origin, it can not be stopped. When these things ally together in a state, its people are stronger than its government. When none of these things exist in a state, its government is stronger than its people. When a people are stronger than their government, the state is weak. When a government is stronger than its people, its state is powerful." [2]

In the second place, the theories of the Confucianists and Micianists injure the state because

[1] Chap. 13.
[2] Chap. 5.

they attempt to draw the people away from fighting and farming. It has been Shang Yang's whole scheme to make fighting and farming the only source from which fame and profit can emerge to light upon the people. Now, if the teachings of Confucius and Micius are tolerated in the state, the people will find other paths to fame. Moreover, if the sovereign honors, as many of the kings did at that time, the followers of their teachings, then another opening is given to rank and emolument. According to Shang Yang, the result of this will be disastrous. From the very beginning, the energy of the state will not be concentrated; and probably most of the people will, in order to secure fame and wealth, pursue the ways of Confucianism and Micianism, which involve much less danger and toil than fighting and farming.[1] Ultimately, the state will become poor and weak. Poor, because, "while a hundred eat, only one man will, perhaps, farm." Weak, because, though thousands practice virtue, few can fight.[2] To Shang Yang, such a state can be only extremely distasteful. Thus he says:

"The state which likes to employ the services of worms will be exterminated. The worms are namely: li and music, poetry and history, cultivation of virtue, filiality and brotherliness, honesty and earnestness, uprightness and candour, benevolence and justice, denunciation of armaments and condemnation of war. When a state has these things, the superior possesses no way to make the

[1] Chap. 3.
[2] *Ibid.*

people farm and fight. Its wealth will be shrunken; its territory will be despoiled."[1]

Nor does Shang Yang's policy of education exclude Confucian and Mician teachings alone. It excludes everything that may divide the people's energy and divert them from farming and fighting. He does not approve of the profession of tradesman, for it pursues a different path from farming for profit. He does not sanction the practice of recruiting volunteers noted for bravery, for he desires all his people to be brave.[2] In short, his whole system of education is directed to this one end: To secure "oneness" for his state.

Thus we see that, in Shang Yang's scheme, force is the primal motive, and law is its incarnation. His aim is to secure wealth and power for the state. His policy is to compel the people to apply themselves to farming and fighting. His means of achieving his ends is to make these two things the only paths to fame and position; and the instrument that forges and guarantees the efficiency of his means is law itself.

Having examined these fundamental principles, we are now ready to discuss the application of them in detail. Why should Shang Yang lay such special emphasis upon farming? First, because agriculture was generally considered the foundation of the state of his time. Without

[1] Chap. 13.
[2] Chap. 3.

agriculture there would be no food. Without food there would be no people. Without people there would be no army.[1] Secondly, agriculture was also the chief productive industry of his age. It was the only way through which a state might become richer than others. In this connection it is remarkable to note that Shang Yang entertained as early as the fourth century before Christ certain commercial principles not unlike the mercantile doctrines which prevailed in Europe some twenty centuries later. Said he:

> "When an ounce of gold is produced inside the state, twelve bushels of grain must be gathered in from outside. When twelve bushels of grain is produced inside the state, an ounce of gold is also produced outside. If a state is prone to produce gold inside, both gold and grain will vanish, both its storage and its treasury will be empty, and the state will be weak. If a state is prone to produce grain inside, then both gold and grain will be produced, both its storage and its treasury will be filled, and the state will be powerful."[2]

This passage may sound rather enigmatical in its translation; but it is even more so in the original language. At any rate, the gist of the whole matter is simply that Shang Yang regards farming as the only productive industry, not even excepting the business of gold mining. Now, if a state is bent upon mining gold for instance, it has to rely upon other states for its supply of food. So it has to buy grain from outside with its gold, presumably at twelve bushels for an ounce of

[1] Chaps. 6, 15.
[2] Chap. 4.

gold. In this way, the gold which it has produced will go into the possession of another, and the grain which it has bought will also soon be consumed. Therefore, he says, both grain and gold will have vanished. On the other hand, if the state changes its policy and encourages farming, the tables will be turned to its advantage. It will grow sufficient grain for its own comsumption; and when it has a surplus, it may sell it to other states for gold. So it is as Shang Yang says, "Both gold and grain will be produced." In fine, the principle is exactly in agreement with the idea of a balance of trade in mercantilism. It seeks to have a favorable balance, that is, more export than import. It aims to make the state producer rather than consumer. Thus, Shang Yang's policy of fostering agriculture is entirely in accordance with modern commercial tendencies. That he merely emphasized farming and not the development of natural resources as a whole as the modern statesman does, is simply due to a difference in time.

Shang Yang, however, has still another reason for making farming the only path to profit in his political scheme. He explains:

> "The sage knows the key to good government. So he attaches the people's minds to agriculture. Their minds being attached to agriculture, the people are simple and easy to correct. As they are scattered here there in the country, so they are easy to command. Again, as they are occupied with one fixed profession, they are devoid of falsehood and value their homes. When they value their

homes, they may be depended upon to defend and fight for their country."[1]

Thus we see that, never relapsing nor relenting, Shang Yang has his eyes always fixed upon one aim—to concentrate the energies of his people and to inure the people to fighting.

Such being the reasons why he emphasizes farming, how will he wield the law so as to foster it? What measures will he take in order to make farming the sole path to profit in the state? Several contrivances Shang Yang finds. First, he attempts to impress upon the people a tenacious love for their homes. He forbids emigration into other states without governmental permission.[2] He designs to make the people invest their capital entirely in land. The reason for this is clear, as we have already somewhat explained sprevioulv. But we shall enlarge upon it a little further by Shang Yang's own words:

"The capital of dialecticians is in their tongues. The capital of scholars is in their thoughts. The capital of craftsmen is in their hands. The capital of merchants is in their persons. Thus to them any spot on the earth may be a home. They carry their capital upon their persons and journey wherever they are valued. Such people are difficult to govern even for emperors like Yao and Shun."[3]

But farming, according to Shang Yang, is a profession quite different from the others. He continues:

"Agriculture leads to simplicity. When people are simple, they are satisfied with their homes and dislike

[1] Chap. 3.
[2] Chap. 2.
[3] Chap. 6.

emigration. Thus, under the rule of a sage, the capital of the people is caused to be invested in land, and danger becomes rife outside the boundaries of the state. When their capital is invested in land, the people become simple-minded. When danger is rife outside the boundaries of the state, once the people go outside they will get excited. Simple while inside the state, excited while outside, the people will be assiduous in farming and daring in fighting. Assiduous farming will produce greater capital for the people. Daring fighting will give fresh danger to the neighboring states. When their capital is great, the people can not carry it away easily and flee from the country. When the neighboring states are in danger, the people dare not emigrate to them."[1]

Thus we see that, in order to make the people attached to their land, Shang Yang will resort even to constant fighting with his neighboring states. In its ingenuity, it is not unlike the methods used by modern statemen who are apt to maintain continual bickering with other countries in order to keep burning in the hearts of their own people the fire of so-called nationalism.

Secondly, Shang Yang tries to foster farming by making the people indifferent to any other profession. To this end, Shang Yang adopts almost exactly Laotze's striking principle of stultification of the people, though no philosopher could differ more than these two. It is Shang Yang's belief that as farming involves much toil, the people will, as soon as they become aware that there are other and easier paths to profit, desert

[1] Chap. 6.

these fields. So, while on the one hand he takes care to hinder other professions by so many restrictions as to make them entirely undesirable, on the other hand he also sees to it that such professions will never be allowed to invade the hamlets and villages and to disturb his people's simplicity. Says he:

> "None of the ministers and officers of the state are permitted to pursue the business of clever dialectics or to wander among the people, so that the people will hear and see things that they are not accustomed to hearing and seeing. Since the farmers will not hear and see things that they are not accustomed to hearing and seeing, the clever among them will not know how to change their professions, and the stupid among them will not care for learning. . . They all will, therefore, concentrate their energies upon farming. . . and the land will be well-cultivated."[1]

Again, as a supplement to this, Shang Yang affirms that

> "no power or position will be given to any one not according to law so that the people will not value knowledge. If the people do not value knowledge, they are simple. If they are simple, their minds are not divided. If their minds are not divided, they will apply themselves to assiduous farming and not be idle."[2]

Thirdly, Shang launches a campaign against merchants. This is only natural because he aims at making farming the sole path to profit. As the middlemen form the most unproductive class and yet, perhaps, possess the most lucrative profession, Shang Yang is particularly resentful

[1] Chap. 2.
[2] *Ibid.*

towards them. In his system, no effort is spared to impose upon the merchants burdens and restrictions. Thus, he lays forbidding taxes on passes and markets, regulates the prices of commodities, and enforces other severe restrictions so that it becomes almost impossible for merchants to thrive and forces them to return to farming.[1]

Fourth, other idle people in the state besides the merchants are also compelled to work. Provides Shang Yang:

> "Those who have large emolument and a great number of people dependent upon them for a living are the people who injure farming. Thus heavy requirement should be exacted from them so that the idle, indulgent people will not be able to provide themselves with easy food. When they cannot provide themselves with easy food, they will have to return to farming.[2]

Also, malefactors must not be allowed to disturb the tillers of the land. Continues he:

> "A system of severe punishments shall be ordained so that pugnacious people will not scuffle, quarrelsome people will not dispute, idle people will not wander, wasteful people will not be excessive, and evil people will not agitate. If these five kinds of people do not flourish in the state, the land will be well-cultivated." [3]

Lastly, after farming has thus been made the sole path to profit, Shang Yang takes pains to encourage assiduous farming among the tillers themselves. It is commonly attributed to him that he intended to break up the family system

[1] Chap. 2.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*

of China so that each individual might be compelled to work by himself and for himself alone. Again, it is ascribed to him that it was he who first disestablished the old communistic scheme of owing land, such as we have described in our second chapter, and instituted private ownership as a further incentive to energetic application to farming.[1] Although sufficient evidences are lacking to support both of these assertions,[2] it is not improbable, and still less impossible, that Shang Yang had done his best along these lines to promote the development of agriculture in the state of Ch'in.

The enrichment of the state, however, is but one of the two policies of Shang Yang, and perhaps the less important one. To Shang Yang, as it is to Machiavelli, the state is a dynamic organism. It is a state of action. It must expand, or it will die. Hence, his second principle—militarism. Says Shang Yang:

> "When *oneness* is established, then the energy of the state is concentrated. When the energy of the state is concentrated, the state is powerful. When it is powerful and yet is able to use its power, it produces energy and provides a vent for it. Thus I say that state is powerful which always attacks others. How is it? When only one path is opened to fame and position and all other private roads are prohibited, the people will devote themselves entirely to what the government requires; hence, there is abundant energy. When there is abundant energy, it must seek some vent. When no vent is given to it, the people will fall back upon their selfish desires.

[1] "The Records of History"—"Biography of Shang Yang."
[2] See C. C. Liang's book, pp. 86.

> When they fall back upon their selfish desires, the state is weakened. For it only produces energy and does not provide an outlet for it. Hence I say, the state which attacks itself is bound to decline."[1]

In other words, Shang Yang considers the people a dynamic force. It must explode somewhere. If the government is wise enough to let it explode upon others, the state will reap great benefit by way of conquest. Otherwise, the people will explode among themselves, and thus work unspeakable damage to the state. Says he: "If a state is powerful and yet does not fight, the poison will remain inside. . . If such a state fights, the poison will be transfused into others."[2]

Thus a state must fight. But how will it fight? Shang Yang answers, if a state fights at all, it should fight with all its might and main. Shang Yang is, perhaps, the first man in the world who has visualized clearly the possibility of fighting with the strength of the whole nation. He does not lay special emphasis upon a trained army; he wants the entire people to be the army. He does not stress much the necessity of securing good generals; he desires to have victory assured, with or without a good general. Thus he declares:

> "That state is powerful, which is able to use its people. How can one know whether or not a state is able to use its people? When its people look at war as if they were

[1] "Records of History"—"Biography of Shang Yang." Chap. 5.
[2] Chap. 4.

hungry wolves looking at a piece of meat, then it is able to use its people.

"Now, war is a thing that is commonly abhorred. If a state can make its people enjoy war, then it will be able to conquer the whole empire.

"In a powerful state, such is the sentiment of the people that when war breaks out, the fathers will bid farewell to their sons, elder brothers will bid farewell to their younger ones, wives will bid farewell to their husbands, all saying: 'Return not, if you cannot conquer,' and also, 'If you were to violate the law and disobey your command, it would be just as though you killed us and your countrymen.'"[1]

Thus, Shang Yang's militarism bears a remarkable kinship to the modern nationalistic principles. His is almost the same idea as that which was so predominant in the last world war; and that is, to fight with every joy of force the state can summon and with every tittle of resource it can draw forth—to fight with sovereign and subject, men and women, tooth and nail alike—in short, to fight with the whole nation. For this is the only sure way to victory. Says he:

"If two opposing armies are equal in force, the one whose general is able wins; and the one whose general is not so able will be defeated. But if the plans have long been designed in the government so that the people cannot but fight and win, then the state will win, be its general able or unable. He who holds the secret of victory cannot but become so powerful as to attain to imperial dignity."[2]

But how will the secret of victory be carried out? By what means can the people be so taught that they cannot but fight and win? It

[1] Chap. 18.
[2] Chap. 10.

is in this connection that there appears the best-known part of Shang Yang's philosophy — his theories of reward and punishment. The gist of the matter may be seen in the following statement of his:

> "To the brave people, rewards are awarded so as to gratify their desires. To the cowardly people, punishments are laid down so as to intimidate them by what they fear. Thus when the cowardly people are commanded by means of punishment, they turn brave; when the brave people are commanded by means of reward, they will dare death itself." [1]

Only a few words are needed to explain Shang Yang's system of reward and punishment, so far as its application to military discipline is concerned. It is in part but a deduction from his main principle; that fighting should be made the only path to fame and position. Hence, for instance, he prescribes:

> "He who can kill one enemy of rank will be awarded a rank and given in addition a thousand acres. All those who charge into the enemy and rout them will be awarded each a rank.
>
> "If one man charges into the enemy and dies, and the rest dare not follow, the ears of all those who dare not follow shall be cut off." [2]

Again, it is stated in the "Records of History" as Shang Yang's regulation that

> "even kindred of the sovereign were not granted rank and fief without military merit. Several ranks were established to signify grades of honor and emolument. To each of them was assigned a special allotment of house and estate,

[1] Chap. 5.
[2] Chap. 19.

servants and clothes, etc. Those who had military merits were given honor and fame. Those who had not were not allowed to indulge in luxury, even though they were wealthy."[1]

But Shang Yang did not apply his theory of punishment and reward to military discipline alone. On the contrary, he gave it a further development as well as a much larger field of application. In fact, he made it the most effective weapon in his whole political scheme by which to regulate the people. Asserts he:

"Nothing in the world can benefit the people more than government. Nothing can maintain a government better than the establishment of a sovereign. Among the ways to establish a sovereign, none is more effective than the enforcement of law. Among the necessities in the enforcement of law, none is more urgent than the extermination of evil. Among the essentials in the extermination of evil, none is more important than making punishments severe.

"Thus, he who is worthy of imperial dignity prohibits evil by means of reward and encourages good by means of punishment. He seeks crime and not virtue. He employs punishment in order to abolish punishment."[2]

This utterance of Shang Yang may sound at first like the most difficult puzzle that has ever been created by his people to perplex the Western reader. But, as a matter of fact, its thought is as logical as it is original; and it comprises the very essence of Shang Yang's theory of reward and punishment. When we read it carefully, two principles stand out clearly. First, the

[1] "Biography of Shang Yang."
[2] Chap. 7.

government seeks only crime and not virtue. Second, the government employs punishment in order to abolish punishment. From the first, Shang Yang draws the deduction that the government may prohibit evil by means of reward. From the second, he reaches the conclusion that the government may encourage good by means of punishment. This explanation is still far from being clear. So let us hear from Shang Yang again:

> "As evil may be great or small so punishment must be heavy or light. As good may be great or small, so rewards must be great or small. These two things are the common practice of the times. But they are not correct. If punishment is inflicted only after the consummation of crime, evil will not be exterminated. If reward is given only to whom the people consider virtuous, malefactions will not be stopped. If punishment cannot exterminate evil and reward cannot stop malefaction, then confusion is bound to appear. Thus, he who is worthy of imperial dignity inflicts punishments before the consummation of crime. Hence, great evils do not take place. He gives reward to informers of evil. Hence, even small malefactions will not be left undiscovered. If the people are so governed that great evils will not take place and small malefactions will not be left undiscovered, then the state is well-governed. When the state is well-governed, it is powerful."[1]

Now the puzzle of Shang Yang becomes easier to understand. His first principle may be narrowed down to this one regulation; that he will reward informers and no one else. He seeks only crime, and not virtue. He prohibits evil by means of

[1] Chap. 7.

reward. Thus he argues further against the Confucian principle of encouraging virtue:

> "If virtue is cultivated in the state, the people will attach themselves to their kindred. If informers are depended upon, the people will attach themselves to the law. . . When virtue is encouraged, crimes will be concealed. When informers are trusted, guilty persons will be convicted. When crimes are concealed, the people are stronger than the law. When guilty persons are convicted, the law is stronger than the people. When the people are stronger than the law, the state is in a state of confusion. When the law is stronger than the people, the state becomes powerful."[1]

The basis of this theory is simply this: Since law must be enforced, a way should be contrived so that none dare even to stand against the law; since evil must be stopped, a means should be found so that no one dares even to commit a crime. This way, or means, Shang Yang believes to have found in rewarding informers. He explains:

> "The reason why confusion comes upon a state is not that its laws are confused, or that they are not enforced. But it is that, though it may have laws, it does not have a law that assures that its laws will be enforced; and, though it may have laws that prohibit evil and proscribe banditry, it does not have a law that guarantees that the wrongdoers will be discovered and punished."[2]

The rewarding of informers is, then, a part of the law that assures that the laws of the state will be enforced, and that guarantees that the wrongdoers will be discovered and punished. It places

[1] Chap. 5.
[2] Chap. 18.

everyone on the alert to look for crimes. It adds ever so much more difficulty to criminals in their attempts to elude the grasp of the law. But that is not all Shang Yang's ingenuity has contrived. In addition, he imposes upon the people what is known as collateral responsibility. According to this, he orders that every five or ten families guarantee each other. When one family commits a violation of the law, if the others do not immediately report it, they shall also be punished.[1] By such contrivances and others, Shang Yang endeavours to enforce his laws to such an extent that none dare even to think of violating them. Thus says he, describing his aim:

> "He who governs well will make even Cheh the well-known bandit reliable, not to speak of Po Yi who was famous for his honesty. He who cannot govern well will make even Po Yi suspected, not to speak of Cheh. When no circumstance exists that allows the possibility of evil, even Cheh may be trusted. When every circumstance exists that allows possibilities of evil, even Po Yi may be suspected."[2]

Now we come to Shang Yang's second principle —to employ punishment in order to abolish punishment. How does he proceed to do it? By way of making punishments severe. He says:

> "In inflicting punishment, even light crimes should be punished severely. When the light crimes are stopped, the heavier crimes will not appear. That is what I mean

[1] "The Records of History"—"Biography of Shang Yang."
[2] Chap. 18.

by employing punishment to abolish punishment. In that event, punishment no longer becomes necessary, and the affairs of the state will be well-governed. On the contrary, if heavy crimes are given light punishment, no sooner is the punishment inflicted than other evils are born. That is what I designate as the generation of punishment by punishment. In that case, the state is bound to become weakened."[1]

To be more specific, Shang Yang intends to reap a three-fold harvest from the sowing of a code of severe punishment. In the first place, he believes that severe punishment, along with the system of rewarding informers, is able to suppress the wave of crime. He alleges:

"To prohibit evil and to stop malefaction, nothing is more effective than severe punishment. When punishment is severe and discovery is certain, then none will dare to risk the prohibitions of law. Hence, no criminal exists in the state. As no criminal exists in the state, so it is said, 'The government only makes clear the punishments and need not perform any execution.'"

In the second place, strange though it may seem, Shang Yang believes that severe punishments will make the people respect their government all the more. He declares:

"When punishment is employed to abolish punishment, the state is well-governed. When punishment is employed to produce punishment, the state is chaotic. Hence, I say: 'If the light crimes be given heavy punishment, punishment will no longer become necessary, and the state will become powerful. If heavy crimes be given heavy punishments and light crimes light punishments, no sooner is a punishment inflicted than other evils are born. Such a state will become weak.'

[1] Chap. 13.

"Punishment produces energy. Energy produces power. Power produces majesty. Majesty produces benevolence." [1]

The idea is that by contrast with the severe punishment of the state, the kindnesses of the sovereign will be appreciated all the more, rewards will be prized all the more, positions will be esteemed all the more, and the people will revere their sovereign all the more. Asserts Shang Yang:

"When punishments are heavy, rank will be the more respected. When rewards are light, punishments will appear the more severe. When rank is respected, the superior will appear the more benevolent to the people, inasmuch as he seems so much above them. When punishments appear severe, the people will die for their superior, inasmuch as they dare not incur his punishment. Thus the state prospers." [2]

So with the doctrine of severe punishment, Shang Yang advocates also the principle of light reward. He explains further:

"Make punishments heavy and rewards light, and the superior will appear benevolent and the people will die for him. Make rewards heavy and punishments light, and the superior will not appear benevolent and the people will not die for him. In a thriving state, when punishments are inflicted, the people are benefited by, and also afraid of, them. When rewards are awarded, the people are benefited by, and also fond of, them." [3]

In short, all these are calculated to enhance the majesty of government and to magnify its

[1] Chap. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*

benevolence in order to make the people revere and love it.

In the third place, Shang Yang believes that his system is able to better acquaint the people with the law, and thus secure all the advantages that may be derived therefrom. He holds that the best-governed and most powerful state is the one in which not only the sovereign and his ministers, but the people as well, take care that its laws are executed. In his opinion, such a desirable result may be obtained by his system of inflicting severe punishments and rewarding informers. Thus he expounds:

"If every family of a state takes care that the law be executed, that state will conquer the whole empire. If the officers of a state take care that the law be executed, that state will be powerful. If only the sovereign of a state takes care that the law be executed, that state will be weak.

"Render punishment unnecessary by inflicting severe punishment upon light crimes, and the burden of the government will be lightened. Make it necessary for the people to inform of evil, and the people will have to adjudicate cases in their minds and know how to follow their superior's commands. . . Hence, when a sage occupies the imperial throne, every punishment and reward is given even as they are decided in the people's minds.

"When the law is clear, the decisions of the people will agree with one another. When the law is obscure, the decisions of the people will differ from one another. When the people agree, the law will be enforced When the people differ, the law will not be enforced. When the law is enforced, the result is good government. When the law is not enforced, the result is confusion. In case of good government, every family takes care that the law be executed. In case of confusion, only the sovereign takes

> care that the law be executed. Hence, those who rule over states desire that the law be executed by the people."[1]

So it is by a system of severe punishment that Shang Yang undertakes to exterminate crime, to enhance the majesty and benevolence of the government, and to compel everybody in the state to observe and execute its regulations and commands.

Thus we see how, through punishment and reward, Shang Yang attempts to enforce his law. Through law he aims to make fighting and farming the only paths to profit and position. By achieving that feat, he intends to concentrate the energy of the state. By concentrating its energy, he purposes to conquer the whole known world of ancient times. The significance of this theory needs no comment. It separates politics completely from ethics. It regards the state as nothing but a dynamic organism. Its one motto is expediency, its one aim is expansion. It is a theory of force *par excellence.*

So far as the achievement of its ends is concerned, the practicability of such a theory is self-evident. For a trained pugilist is naturally better versed in boxing than an ordinary man, and it was veritably on the strength of Shang Yang's system that the state of Ch'in finally succeeded in subjugating the whole empire. So far as the logic of the theory is concerned, it

[1] Chap. 5.

is also invulnerable. For, once you admit its premises, you cannot but acknowledge the consistency of the rest, however brutal and ruthless it may prove to be. But it is not the practicability of the scheme that we question, but its purpose. It is not the sequence of the doctrine that we doubt, but its premises. In the first place, there is his conception of autocratic law-making, which we consider to be the root of all despotism. It is neither like the Confucian philosophy, which is based upon a principle of benevolence, nor like the theory of Kwangtze which is patterned according to human want. It places the people entirely at the mercy of the sovereign, and it gives law an ominous predominance. Under such a system, liberty does not exist; and if there is progress at all, it will be a progress carved out of one man's brain, but neither created, nor understood, nor enjoyed at all by the people.

In the second place, the whole theory mistakes materialistic tinsel for spiritualistic gold. It appears to have its roots entirely in the evil side of men, and not in the good. Thus, his system of punishment may be said to be based upon cowardice, and his system of reward is rooted in treachery. He induces men to apply themselves to farming by arousing their miserly desire for profit. He goads them into fighting by intoxicating them with a slavish reverence for rank and

position. In short, had his theory been completely carried out, we would have for an ideal state a combination of nothing but brutal force and inhuman cunning. Under such a system, there would be no room for love, for sympathy, for true courage, for lofty ideals, for that which is good and noble in man.

Finally, let us ask this question: What could be the ultimate end of Shang Yang's entire philosophy? What could it profit him, even if he did gain the world? It seems that Shang Yang has never given much thought to the subject. He is so engrossed in his desire for conquest and expansion that he rarely speculates upon the future beyond that stage. In only two places in his book of twenty-six chapters does he spare a few words for the topic in order to justify his system; and then he appears to be excessively optimistic. Says he:

> "If one state practices my theory, it will be the only strong nation in the world. If two states practice it, war and strife may be a little lessened. If the entire world practices it, the golden age will return to us once more." [1]

Again,

> "If fighting may be abolished by fighting, then it is justifiable to fight. If killing may be abolished by killing, then it is justifable to kill." [2]

Although Shang Yang has not given us any further explanations, his trend of thought is clear.

[1] Chap. 7.
[2] Chap. 18.

The practice of his system, he holds, is conducive to only two possible results—either a balance of power or a universal conquest by one state. In both cases, he maintains that peace will be assured and the golden age of fabulous felicity will return again to revive the fallen world of men.

But can this be true? We need not resort to Plato's old dialectics that no good can be derived from evil, in order to defeat Shang Yang's claims. We shall assail him with the very weapons that he has forged himself. He has said that only that state can be strong which produces energy as well as providing a vent for it. He has maintained that fighting is the only possible vent for the superfluous energy of a state. He has also declared that if a state is strong and yet does not fight, its people will fall back upon their selfish desires, its energy will be divided, and the ultimate result will be that its various factions will fight among themselves. Now, we need only to set these arguments loose upon his latest assertion. Granted that several states practice his theory and achieve a balance of power, will peace be assured thereby? No. They have to provide vents for their energy, and they must fight continually among themselves. Again, suppose one state alone practices his system and accomplishes a universal conquest; will tranquility be long maintained under the ruler of such a world empire? No. Since it has vanquished all, it will have none to fight against.

Thus its poison will remain inside itself. Divide it again into rival sections, and cause them to repeat the process of fighting and conquest once more. Indeed, this is exactly what actually happened. From the time that Shang Yang launched the state of Ch'in upon the path of expansion, for almost a century not a single moment of repose was secured for the people, not a year passed without the occurrence of a bloody war, until finally the so-called First Emperor succeeded in subjugating all the other six states. But then did peace continue long? Not more than thirty years elapsed before the poison exploded from within, and the empire was torn to pieces anew. Thus it is proved that, if Shang Yang's system be practiced at all, not only the best that is in man will be lost, but even the very evil it purposes ostentatiously to abolish will become all the more rampant.

So, in spite of the cogency of his logic, in spite of the brilliancy of his genius, we have to render a decisive verdict against Shang Yang's system. Truly his philosophy is not unlike his life. For in both we have found the same ruthless striving for success and power, the same inhuman unscrupulousness and immovability, an equally striking beginning, and an equally dreadful end.

CHAPTER VIII

HAN FEI

THE last of the legalists whom we shall discuss in this book is Han Fei. He was a prince of the State of Han, and lived in the third century before Christ. He studied the Confucian philosophy at first, but soon turned his energies in the direction of the legalists. He published at this time several essays, which now form a part of the book ascribed to him, and which, it is recorded, attracted the notice of the Prince of Ch'in and drew from him this remark: "Had I only such a man as this by my side, I could face even death without regret."[1] Ever since that time, Han Fei has been regarded by many Chinese scholars as the central figure of the Legalists[2] and now it is our purpose to find out whether or not he deserves such high esteem.

The sources of Han Fei's political philosophy are rather miscellaneous. Strange as they are, it is, to some extent, an attempt to combine Laotze's Taoistic principles with Shang Yang's legalistic doctrines. To our reader, perhaps, no two philosophies can be so intrinsically hostile to each other than these; and no task can seem more

[1] "The Records of History — Biography of Han Fei."
[2] See C. C. Liang's "A History of Political Thought Before the Dynasty of China," p. 110.

difficult than to bring them together into one melting pot. But this feat Han Fei achieves by an ingenious distinction between what he calls law and craft. Says he:

> "The great weapons of a ruler of men are his law and his craft. Law is what is written in the books and statutes, established in the governmental departments and offices, and promulgated to the multitude. Craft is what is hidden in the ruler's chest, used by him as a correct standard to measure all things by, and wielded as a weapon to control the doings of his numerous officers. Thus it is best for law to be clear; and it is undesirable for craft to be seen." [1]

Again,

> "Craft is that which is held by the ruler. Law is that which is observed by the officers." [2]

But what is craft made of? How is it to be used? It is in reply to these questions that Han Fei shows the colors of Taoism. As we recall, the principles of the Taoists are centered in their Way, which is "to be able to be nothing." Now, to a certain extent Han Fei thinks that the ruler's craft should not be anything but the observance of the Way. It is Laotze's principle that by doing nothing everything may be done. So in a modified way it is also Han Fei's belief that, if the ruler keeps to the Way, good government will be the result. Affirms he:

> "The Way is the beginning of all things and the standard of right and wrong. Hence, an intelligent king

[1] "The Records of History — Biography of Han Fei," Chap. 38.
[2] Chap. 44.

always holds to the beginning in order to know whence all things are derived, and keeps to the standard in order to know how good and evil come to be. Hence, he makes himself empty and calm and waits for the law to enforce itself so that all the characters of things will be defined of themselves and all the affairs will be settled of themselves."[1]

So far, therefore, Han Fei shows himself a Taoist. But that, however, is the end of his Taoism. Beyond that he has a wholly different theory. In the first place, he is not so idealistic as to desire a return to a life of simplicity and contentment. In the second place, he does not believe that the observance of the Way alone will be sufficient to achieve good government. What he finds in the observance of the Way is simply this: There is certain advantage for a ruler to be nothing—that is, to be always "empty" and calm. When a ruler is "empty" and calm, he is less biased. When he is less biased, he will be the less deceived, and good government is thus the more assured. He explains:

"Because the ruler is empty, he is able to know the circumstances of those who are substantial. Because he is calm, he is able to understand those who are agitated. Those things which have speech will define their own character; those which have affairs will shape their own development. When the definition of everything is in agreement with its form, when the name of everything is in accordance with its truth, then the ruler has nothing more to do.

"Thus I say: 'If the ruler does not show any inclination, the ministers will chisel their own conduct according

[1] Chap. 5.

to righteousness. If the ruler displays any opinion of his own, the ministers will act differently.' Thus it is said, 'Discard your likes and dislikes, and the ministers will show simplicity; abandon precedences and wisdom, and the ministers will cultivate perfection in themselves."[1]

From this we see that what is the fundamental principle of Laotze's political philosophy is employed here by Han Fei only as a means—a very important means, but still nothing more than a means—to secure the proper operation of government. By not making his own wishes known, the ruler may instil fear into the ministers' minds so that they dare not neglect their duties. By making himself unprejudiced, he may also maintain a clear understanding of the nature of all things so that under his rule none will venture to exceed his own rights. As we shall find presently, this theory exercises a great and continual influence upon Han Fei's political philosophy. But nevertheless, it remains just an influence and nothing more. It is a prop to support the foundation of the state; but it is not the foundation itself.

What is the foundation of a state then? It is law. Says Han Fei:

"To correct the misjudgments of the superiors, to rectify the evil of the inferiors, to restore good government out of confusion, and to standardize the people's course of conduct—for these nothing is better than law."[2]

[1] Chap. 5.
[2] Chap. 6.

This statement reveals Han Fei instantly as a legalist at core. Law is regarded by him as the only criterion by which right and wrong should be judged. It is the chief means by which to stop confusion and strife. It is the only instrument by which a nation may be regulated and become united. Hence, we find that so far as the general principles of government are concerned, Han Fei is in thorough agreement with Kwangtze and Shang Yang.

The agreement extends further. In discussing the various properties of law, Han Fei follows also the footsteps of his predecessors very closely. First, exactly as Kwangtze and Shang Yang have done before, he advocates the principle of adapting law to circumstances. Says he:

> "Those who do not understand how to govern always give this advice: 'Do not alter what has been accepted by time; do not change what is the usual occurrence.' But to alter or not to alter, that is not the question in the mind of the sage. The sage's only aim is to secure good government. Whether or not ancient practices should be altered, or whether or not the usual occurrences should be changed, depends entirely upon whether or not ancient practices and usual occurrences are practicable."[1]

Again, Han Fei affirms:

> "The sage aims neither at the cultivation of what is ancient nor at the observance of what is usual. He examines the affairs of his time, and provides for them."[2]

All these are, of course, directed against the idealists of the age, such as the Confucianists and

[1] Chap. 18.
[2] Chap. 49.

the Micianists who attempt to legislate upon the basis of eternity. These two latter schools are particularly apt to attribute their doctrines to ancient personages; and so Han Fei lashes them with the following ridicule:

"In ancient times, there were more animals than men. The people could not overcome the fowls and mammals, worms and serpents. There was a sage who gathered sticks of wood together and made nests in the trees in order to avoid the numerous evils; and the people liked it. So he was made emperor and entitled 'The One Who Invented The Nest.' Again, in those times the people ate fruit and vegetables, fish and oysters. They were raw and stinky, and injurious to the stomach. So many of the people were affected with disease. Then a sage arose, who built fire out of driving screws into wood and thus made cooking possible; and the people liked it. Hence, he was made emperor and called 'The One Who Gave Fire To Man.' In medieval times, the world suffered from a great flood; and Yü the Great abated it. In near-modern times, Cheh [the last ruler of the Hsia dynasty] and Cho [the last ruler of the Yin dynasty] oppressed the people; and King Tang and King Wu overthrew them. Now if in the time of Hsia there had been any one who made nests in the trees and built a fire by driving screws into wood, he would have been a laughing-stock to Yü the Great. If in the time of Yin and Chow there had been anyone who attempted to abate a flood, he would have been a laughing-stock to King Tang and King Wu. Now, if there are some people who praise the ways of Yao and Shun, of Yü the Great, and of King Tang and King Wu, must they not be laughing-stocks to the modern sages?"[1]

Again, like Kwangtze, Han Fei is of the opinion that law should be established in accordance with human nature. While he holds that the ruler should not display his own likes and dislikes, he

[1] Chap. 49.

should always be on the alert to sound what the people approve and disapprove. Thus he alleges that

"government must be based on human nature. As in human nature there are likes and dislikes, so reward and punishment may be employed as weapons. As reward and punishment may be employed as weapons, so commands and prohibitions may be inforced, and the foundation of a good government becomes complete."[1]

Also, we are told by him:

"He who rules over a state has his power over his officers and the masses established. Of what the officers and the masses approve, the ruler should approve. Of what the officers and the masses do not approve, neither should he approve."[2]

In this respect, therefore, Han Fei deviates from the path that Shang Yang has made. While the latter believes that law may be so used as to compel the people to do what they dislike, the former thinks that such a procedure will be not only of no avail, but also conducive to disobedience and violation of the law. Thus Han Fei contends:

"If you force the people to do what they dislike to do and prohibit what they desire, even if you be a god your commands will not be obeyed. If you reward what the people condemn and punish what they praise, even if you be such an emperor as Yao your government will not be successful."[3]

However Han Fei may disagree with Shang Yang in regard to the making of law, so far as

[1] Chap. 48.
[2] Chap. 9.
[3] Chap. 33.

the enforcement of law is concerned, all the theories of the three legalists are almost exactly alike. First, following the ways of the rest of his school, Han Fei strengthens his law by the girdle of permanence. True, he allows for the necessity of change in accordance with the demands of time; but it is equally true that he disallows frequent alterations which are founded on no greater reason than fleeting whims. Thus he explains:

> "If a workman changes his occupation frequently, he will meet with failure. If a laborer moves too often from one place to another, he will not achieve any success. Now, if one man loses in every day half a day's labor, in ten days he will lose five men's labor. If ten thousand men lose every day half a day's labor, in ten days they will lose five thousand men's labor. So it is that with those who change their occupations frequently, the more numerous they are, the greater the loss they suffer.
>
> "Now, if law is altered, what is encouraged and what is prohibited will be changed. When what is encouraged and what is prohibited are changed, the people will be inclined to restlessness. To make the people incline to restlessness, that is as undesirable as to make them change their occupations frequently. So, from the analysis of reason, it is clear that he who holds the masses and yet shakes them often will not achieve much success and he who keeps a valuable utensil and yet shifts it continually from one place to another will do it great injury."[1]

As a logical sequence to this doctrine, Han Fei believes that once the law is established, the ruler should take care that it be enforced at any cost and that it be not interfered with either by his own selfish inclinations or by those of his

[1] Chap. 20.

officers. As we have revealed in the foregoing chapters, the other legalists also maintain the same principle. But to do justice to Han Fei, it must be noted that no legalist, perhaps, realizes so keenly as he does the importance of the man element in a government by law. Time and time again, he attempts to impress upon his reader the idea that though law may be the foundation of the state, yet it is men who are the centers around which the possibilities of confusion and good government revolve. Thus he says:

> "No state is eternally strong. Nor is there a state which is eternally weak. If he who guards the law of a state is strong, that state will be strong. If he who guards the law of a state is weak, that state will be weak." [1]

Furthermore, he illustrates this principle with many historical instances. He surveys the rise and fall of many states, and concludes that their rise and fall is not due to any change of law, for their laws have remained unaltered from the years of their prosperity down to their days of degeneration; but is only due to the strictness and laxity with which their different rulers have enforced their laws.

But how may the laws be strictly enforced? How may the rulers discard their own selfish inclinations? Here we must recall that Han Fei has adapted as his own principle the Way of Taoism; and it is from this that he proceeds

[1] Chap. 6.

to outline two doctrines for the enforcement of law, though other legalists have reached the same conclusions from entirely different starting points. In the first place, he advises the rulers to keep themselves calm and "empty" so that they may maintain an unbiased understanding of all things. Or, at least, they must be able to separate their public functions and their private obligations. As a private individual, they may, perhaps, disclose their dislikes at will. But as sovereigns, they must not follow anything but the letter of the law. He prescribes:

> "The way of a ruler is to understand the difference between what is public and what is private. He should clearly uphold public laws and regulations, and discard acts of private nature. To execute commands and to enforce prohibitions, that is the public duty of a sovereign. To keep his word and to be faithful to his friends, whether or not there is any reward to encourage him to do so or any punishment to prevent him from doing so, that is the private obligation of a subject. When private obligations are upheld by the sovereign, confusion will be the result. When public duties prevail with him, good government will be the consequence. Hence, there should be a distinction between what is public and what is private." [1]

Thus, for kings there can be only one path to tread; and that is the path of duty. They should never walk incognito; but should always be heralded by the formality of law.

> "Therefore, an intelligent ruler alway employs laws to select officers and does not make promotions himself. He always employs law to measure merits and does not evaluate them himself. Thus, those who are able will

[1] Chap. 19.

naturally be recognized, and those who are corrupt will be discovered. Those who are falsely praised will not be advanced, and those who are wrongly calumniated will not be degraded. Hence, between the sovereign and his subjects, everything is clear and good government will be easily achieved."[1]

In the second principle suggested by Han Fei for the enforcement of law, the influence of Taoism is even more prominent than in the first. He believes that the sovereign should not only suppress his own selfish inclinations, but also should take care that no external influence be allowed to lead him astray from the path of law. This principle is not unlike Shang Yang's conception that no law should be changed merely on account of a "lofty counsel," but it is different from the latter in that it has a genuine Taoistic basis. Says Han Fei:

"The way of the sage is to discard wisdom and craftiness. Not to discard wisdom and craftiness is not a normal rule. If a subject follows it, he will suffer many a misfortune. If a sovereign follows it, his state will be jeopardized or overthrown."[2]

Why are wisdom and craftiness so dangerous? The answer of Han Fei to this question, however, is different from that of the Taoists. It is not because they prevent the people from attaining a life of contentment and simplicity, but because they are antagonistic to law. A crafty word may arouse the passions of the sovereign and disturb his calm and "empty" plight. A wise counsel

[1] Chap. 6.
[2] Chap. 8.

of a fleeting moment may attract the ears of the ruler and cause him to make unnecessary and harmful alterations of the law. In both cases, the confidence of the people will be shaken and the efficiency of the government will be impeded. So in Han Fei's opinion, only one craft should be utilized by the sovereign, and that is not to heed others' craftiness; only one kind of wisdom should be idealized, and that is not to be seduced by others' seeming wisdom from the royal road of law. Such, according to him, is the only infallible way of preventing corruption and laying the foundation of a good government. Thus he says:

> "The sovereign must so command his subjects that, even if they have wise thoughts, they are not allowed to follow them arbitrarily in contradiction to the law; even if they do meritorious deeds, they are not allowed to claim precedence in promotion; and even if they have personal virtues, they are not allowed to consider themselves to be above the law." [1]

This principle is excellently illustrated by him in the following narrative:

> "Once upon a time Earl Chao of Han was intoxicated and fell into a sleep. The menial whose duty it was to take charge of the Earl's hats saw that his master was feeling cold and so laid a coat over him. When the Earl awoke, he was pleased. 'Who,' he asked his attendants, 'laid the coat over me?' 'The menial,' answered his attendants, 'having charge of your Highness' hats.'
>
> "So the Earl inflicted punishment upon both the menial who had charge of his coats and the one who had charge of his hats. He punished the former because he did not observe his duty. He punished the latter because he

[1] Chap. 18.

exceeded his duty. Not that the Earl was not afraid of catching cold, but he believed that the evil of injuring law is greater than the evil of catching cold."[1]

In short, to all the legalists, law is the only workable rule for government. Whether it is as good as can be is a question with which they do not concern themselves. What concerns them most is its expediency and the certainty of its enforcement. In their opinion, any law is better than no law; and to observe with rigidity a bad law is more practicable than to alter laws frequently, however good the motive may be. Thus, Han Fei quotes an old saying: "If a family has a constant profession, it may suffer a famine but does not starve. If a state has a normal law, it may be put into jeopardy but may not be overthrown."[2]

Such being Han Fei's theories about the enforcement of law, it is natural that, like Kwangtze and Shang Yang, he is averse to popular criticism of the law. He says:

"In the state that is governed by an intelligent king, commands are esteemed as the most precious of words, and law is regarded as the most appropriate of arrangements. No two words can be equally precious. No two laws can be equally appropriate. Hence, those words and that conduct which are not in agreement with law and commands must be prohibited."[3]

But in this as in other instances, Han Fei is slightly different from the other two legalists.

[1] Chap. 7.
[2] Chap. 19.
[3] Chap. 41.

While he believes that anything that is clearly in contradiction of law should be forbidden, he thinks also that within the law itself a means may be found to stop popular criticism. Thus he continues:

> "If there are those who, though without the authority of law, possess talents that are able to deal with and deliberate upon affairs, the sovereign may heed their words, but must also require substantial proofs of the wisdom of them. If their words prove correct, they will be given great credit. But if their words prove wrong, they will be given severe punishment. Thus, the simple people will fear punishment and dare not speak; and the crafty people may speak and yet may not dispute."[1]

Again, he says:

> "When an intelligent king hears advice, he must exact evidences of its utility. When he examines a course of conduct, he must require proofs of its merits. Thus, those whose knowledge is empty and out of date will not speak, and those whose conduct is unnatural and false will not dare to deceive."[2]

In fact, these principles were products of Han Fei's age. They were directed by him against the opponents of Legalism. He considered that all the other teachings—Confucianism, Micianism, and Taoism pure and simple—were but empty talk. He believed that it was because of the prevalence of their theories that his own state, Han, was weakened. He insisted that Legalism was the only remedy for the situation, and, hence, provided that all theories be tested

[1] Chap. 41.
[2] Chap. 46

by their actualities and that once law had been established, nothing should be allowed to interfere with its enforcement.

To return to his principal theory of law, let us ask Han Fei this question: What are the component parts of his law? Herein Han Fei mainly follows the teachings of Shang Yang. In reply to our inquiry, he declares that law consists chiefly of two elements: reward and punishment. For they are the weapons by which the sovereign is able to control his subjects. He says:

> "What an intelligent king employs to lead and control his subjects is no more than two handles. The two handles are reward and punishment. . . . The subjects are afraid of punishment and fond of reward; hence, if the sovereign employs punishment and reward, his numerous subjects will dread his majesty and attach themselves to his benevolence."[1]

As the chief opponents of Legalism are the Confucianists and the Micianists, Han Fei is not hesitant in defending his own school by means of recrimination. He argues:

> "The scholars of nowadays counsel the rulers of states, but in two ways. If they do not advise that the majesty and power of a state be employed to prevent evil, they will advocate that benevolence and justice, or compassion and love be used. Because the rulers of the present time have been attracted by the names of benevolence and justice and have not examined their truth, some of them have perished along with their respective states, and others have caused the relegation of their own rank and the despoiliation of their own territory. How shall I make this clear? Now, to give alms to the poor and destitute,

[1] Chap. 7.

that is what they call benevolence and justice. To take pity upon the people and to be so tender-hearted as not to employ punishment, that is what they call compassion and love. Now, when you give alms to the poor and destitute, those who are not meritorious are rewarded. When you do not employ punishment, those who are guilty and wrong will not be corrected. If in a state there are people who are rewarded without merit, the people will not fight hard outside and will not farm assiduously inside. They will either curry the favor of the wealthy and influential by means of corrupt methods, or else cultivate private virtues and personal fame in order to attain high position and great emolument. Then, as those who are guilty and wrong will not be punished and corrected, evil will become widespread and malefactions will become more numerous. Under such circumstances, how can a state avoid being overthrown?"[1]

Thus Han Fei continues:

"A good ruler establishes rewards and displays advantages in order to encourage the people. He distributes rewards to people according to merit; but does not give favors according to benevolence and justice. He promulgates prohibitions and ordains severe punishments in order to correct the people. He inflicts punishments upon them according to guilt, and does not pardon them according to compassion and love. Hence, those who have no merit dare not hope for reward; and those who are inclined towards crime dare not risk punishment."[2]

But to denounce others may not prove one's own value. What is, let us ask, the merit of Han Fei's own system of punishment and reward? And what are its guiding principles? So far as reward is concerned, Han Fei has not answered the questions fully. It seems to be based upon merit, and not to be like Shang Yang's theory of

[1] Chap. 14.
[2] *Ibid.*

compensating informers of crime.[1] It aims at encouraging the people to do what the government commands; but it is nothing definite like Shang Yang's doctrine, which makes fighting the only path to honor and position. When we come to punishment, however, the case is a little different. There is a complete and comprehensive theory about it; but even then it is to be noted that it is taken entirely from Shang Yang's political philosophy. In fact, he cites as the very guiding principle of his criminal law the famous utterance of the minister of Ch'in: "In inflicting punishment, even light crimes should be punished heavily. When the light crimes are stopped, the heavier crimes will not appear. That is what I mean by employing punishment to abolish punishment."[2] To this statement Han Fei appears to give rigid adherence and adds nothing but a few annotations and illustrations. For instance, he explains:

"What is meant by heavy punishment is this: The profit which the guilty gains is slight; but the punishment which the superior inflicts upon him is great. The people will not risk great punishment for slight profit; hence, malefactions will be stopped. What is meant by light punishment is this: The profit which the guilty gains is great, but the punishment which the superior inflicts upon him is slight. The people will dare slight punishment for great profit; hence, evil cannot be stopped. Thus the former sages had a saying; 'One does not tumble upon a mountain, but upon a stone.' The mountain is large, therefore men climb it with care. The stone is small,

[1] Chap. 14.
[2] "Shang Yang," Chap. 3; "Han Fei," Chap. 30.

therefore men trifle with it. Now, if light punishment is used, the people will trifle with it also. In that event, if they commit great crimes and are not put to death, the result will be as though the whole nation is abandoned to evil. If they commit great crimes and are put to death, the result will be as though traps have been prepared to ensnare the people. Light punishment is, therefore, a stone for the people to tumble upon. It will either plunge the state into confusion or prepare traps for the people."[1]

After having shown the undesirability of light punishment, Han Fei also unfolds the desirability of severe punishment.

"When an intelligent ruler governs a state, he loads the people with burdens, promulgates a system of severe punishment and rectifies the people by laws and prohibitions, and not by their own personal uprightness.

A mother loves her son better than his father does. But the father's commands are obeyed more than the mother's. As for the magistrates, they do not show any affection for the people; and yet, while ten thousand parents cannot enforce their commands in spite of the love they heap upon their children, the magistrates display their power and the people obey them. Between harshness and benevolence, therefore, the choice can easily be made.

Moreover, what the parents desire of their son is his safety in every move and righteousness in his conduct. What the sovereign requires of his subjects is to demand their lives in case of danger to their country and toil in time of peace. The parents love their son dearly and wish him safety and happiness; and yet they are not heeded. But the sovereign has no love and exacts death and toil, and yet he is obeyed. The intelligent king knows this. Therefore, he does not cultivate benevolence and love, but develops his power and majesty."[2]

When one reads this passage, one cannot but be struck with the similarity that exists between

[1] Chap. 46.
[2] *Ibid.*

the Legalists and Machiavelli. For the same argument appears in the latter's "Prince," and the same conclusion is reached. In both cases, ethics is thrust aside, and expediency is worshipped above all else. They think that to convert the people to good by means of love is too slow and too unreliable a process; and they deem that instilling fear is the best means by which to persuade the people to abide within the confines of the law. Perhaps no better illustration can be found for their theory than the following incidence recorded by Han Fei in his essays:

> "Tung Yui-yü served as magistrate in a district of the Chao state. Once he happened to ramble in a mountain valley. He saw a ravine deep and dangerous, with perpendicular cliffs on both sides hundreds of feet high. He asked the natives who were attending him, 'Has any man ever entered this ravine?' 'No,' came the answer.
>
> "'Has any child, or dullard, or any violent or nervous person ever entered it?'
>
> "'No,' again came the answer.
>
> "'Oh,' sighed Tung Yui-yü, 'I know the secret of government now. If I can only govern with such rigidity as to make punishment as certain as is death upon entrance into this ravine, then no one will dare to affront me, and who can say that good government will not result!'"[1]

The central idea of the whole system is, therefore, to instil fear into the people. As Shang Yang has announced, the government can be strong only when the people are weak. So the Legalists of their type believe that the first principle of government is to weaken the people.

[1] Chap. 30.

They must be intimidated by severe punishment. They must be loaded with heavy burdens. For instance, as a by-product of this theory, Han Fei advocates the principle of imposing heavy taxation. He says:

> "Take, for example, the beloved son of a family, who is given sufficient money to use. When he has sufficient money, he spends it freely. When he spends it freely, he becomes a spendthrift. Again, as the parents love him, they do not wish to restrict him. As they do not wish to restrict him, he will become self-willed. Now, as he is a spendthrift, he will ruin his family: as he is self-willed, he will practice evil." [1]

So, in order to curb such unbecoming tendencies, Han Fei proposes that the people be made sufficiently poor by means of taxation so that they can be easily governed. In fine, the legalists desire nothing but the enforcement of their law and the supremacy of their government. In order to achieve these ends, they will stop at nothing. They will resort to severe punishment. They will utilize heavy taxation. They must show their power and majesty. They must crush the people into obedience by fear.

To return to his system of reward and punishment as a whole, what does Han Fei expect it to accomplish? After an investigation, we find two things. First, he believes that by displaying the majesty of the government and by adjusting rewards in accordance with merit, the people may

[1] Chap. 46.

be impelled to render service to the state to the very limit of their capabilities. Thus he says:

> "Rewards must be certain and sincere, so that the people may profit by them. Punishments must be severe and heavy so that the people may dread them. Laws must be coördinate and permanent so that the people may know them. Hence, the sovereign does not waver in his rewards and does not pardon in his punishments. Wherever he rewards, approval follows. Wherever he punishes, disapproval ensues. In this case, both the good and the bad will serve him to their utmost." [1]

Again, we read:

> "When a sage formulates a law, its rewards are sufficient to encourage the good, its fearfulness is sufficient to subjugate the evil, and its comprehensiveness is sufficient to cover all. Under the rule of such a law, those who have merit will be honored, those who have done their best will be rewarded, and those who have endeavored their utmost will be approved. When the government smiles, it is like spring. When the government frowns, it is like autumn. Hence, the people are induced to render their services to the limit of their strength and to the best in their natures." [2]

The second purpose of reward and punishment is closely connected with the first. As Han Fei desires his people to exert themselves to their utmost for the government, he considers that the best government is one in which the people will not only be loyal in appearance, but also in heart. Not that they are attached to the government through love, but they dare not, out of fear, venture to think even a disloyal thought. So

[1] Chap. 49.
[2] Chap. 26.

here again we see that punishment plays a more important part in his law than reward. Says Han Fei:

> "By a great government, I do not mean simply a government that is just in its distribution of rewards and punishments. To reward the meritorious, to punish the guilty, and to be upright in doing so, these can only produce limited effects upon particular cases, but cannot create new merits and exterminate evil. Thus, among the ways of establishing prohibitions, the best is to curb the thought, the second is to prohibit the speech, and the last is to prohibit the deed." [1]

By this, we can easily prove our statement that between Han Fei and Shang Yang there is a most close relationship. The first aim of Han Fei bears a resemblance to Shang Yang's theory of concentrating the people's energy. His second purpose appears to be related to the latter's policy of making circumstances impossible for any contingency of evil. It may almost be said that, so far as this part of his theory is concerned, Han Fei is a genuine disciple of the famous minister of Ch'in.

These two legalists, however, differ greatly from each other in regard to the ultimate ends of the state. While Shang Yang advocates a ruthless policy of expansion, Han Fei pursues a far more peaceful course. It is here as well as in the beginning that we find that Han Fei is influenced not a little by the Taoistic philosophy. With Shang Yang, the state is a dynamic force; it must

[1] Chap. 44.

expand or cease to exist. With Han Fei, this is not so. A state may have to be able to defend itself; but does not need to feed itself upon others' blood for self-preservation. With Shang Yang, law is a weapon which the government can wield to force its subjects to fight. With Han Fei, it is only the most efficient means whereby to secure good government. The former employs fear in order to make the people look like a pack of foxes before the hounds. The latter lays more emphasis upon that aspect of fear which converts the people into a flock of timid and tame lambs before their shepherd. In short, what the former wants is war; and what the latter wants is peace.

These may be evidenced by the portraits of the ideal state which we encounter here and there in Han Fei's essays. Inside the state he wants everybody to be given what he deserves. This is somewhat like the Taoistic conception which aims at securing for everybody the fulfilment of his nature. Thus Han Fei says:

> "Everything has its fitting place; every talent has its appropriate use. When everyone has work which he is fitted for, there will be nothing for either the superior or the inferiors to do. Let the cocks watch for the dawn, let the cats watch for rats; and the sovereign need do nothing at all."[1]

Thus, strange as it may seem, Han Fei reverts to the "Do-Nothingism" of the Taoistic philosophy by the route of a comprehensive law and a code

[1] Chap. 8.

of severe punishments. In his opinion, by the strict observance of law, everybody may be given his due. When everybody is given his due, peace will reign in the state; and there will be nothing left for the sovereign to do but to enjoy his good government. All the people will be happy, strife will be ended, and a life of contentment may be gained. He says:

> "Hence, the people will not emigrate frequently and communicate with each other often. The noble and the lowly will not intrude upon each other; and the wise and the simple will stand as friends side by side. This is the ideal government."[2]

Then, in regard to the foreign relations of his ideal state, Han Fei believes in the principle of conciliation. He wishes to make his state strong enough for self-protection; but he does not approve of a policy of expansion and conquest. So he says, in one place: "In the case of good kings, they do not entertain hatred and enmity for their neighboring states."[2] And in another, he reaffirms the idea with an utterance which may also be regarded as a summary of his whole philosophy.

> "A sage is one who is well acquainted with the substance of right and wrong and the nature of good government and confusion. Hence, when he rules a state, he establishes unmistakable laws and displays severe punishments in order to save the multitudinous beings from evil and the world from injury, so that the strong will not oppress the weak and the many will not molest the few;

[1] Chap. 7.
[2] Chap. 20.

so that the aged will find comfort and the young will find opportunity for growth: and so that neighboring nations will not attack each other, sovereigns and the subjects will protect each other, fathers and sons will be attached to each other; and there will be no danger of unnatural death, captivity, and enslavement." [1]

Thus, we find that Han Fei's political philosophy is a combination of Tâoistic ideals with Legalistic pragmatism. His ultimate aim is peace for the world and good will towards men. But the instruments he has chosen for the achievement of his aim are fear and law. Following his legalistic predecessors, he lays emphasis on reward and punishment and makes an idol of expediency. But, tinged with Taoistic colors, he advocates a sort of do-nothingism and preaches world peace.

Such a philosophy is not without its value. It is, in a certain sense, a counterbalance for the ultra-legalistic views which tend to consider men as mere tools and conquest and expansion as the ultimate ends of the state. Perhaps it is partly because of this and partly because of his popularization of the legalistic philosophy of his time that the peace-loving Chinese of later generations have come to regard him as the central figure among the Legalists. But whether or not his theory is consistent and practicable on the whole is quite disputable. From evil it is impossible to derive good; and we have yet to discover a state which has maintained peace with its neighboring nations an indomitable belief in the utility of

[1] Chap. 14.

force. Moreover, so far as originality is concerned, Han Fei falls far behind his predecessors. For almost every concept in his philosophy, we can find a previous source. So, despite the fact that he has commonly been esteemed as the first of Legalists in the past, we believe that he has been overestimated and should be accorded but a secondary place in the galaxy of Chinese political thinkers of this period.

CHAPTER IX

MICIUS AND MICIANISM

WHILE the Taoists advocate an extremely passive theory of government and the Legalists oppose it with an exceedingly positive conception of law, standing in the middle of the seesaw and ever striving to maintain a practicable balance, we have the two most-admired political philosophies of ancient China—Micianism and Confucianism. Though differences between the two are many and conflicts are not lacking, in the main it may be said that they have the same ends in view. Neither is averse to the ideal of the Taoists, but they both consider a return to the natural state of life chimerical and impossible. They both also admit that law is a useful weapon of government, but they both believe that law alone is not sufficient to make the world as good as it can be. Discarding the extreme points of view and deliberately choosing a middle path, they develop two theories at once more idealistic than those of the Legalists and yet more practica. than the philosophy of Laotze and Chwangtze.

Leaving Confucianism for a later chapter, we shall discuss here its principal rival of the time—Micianism. The founder of Micianism is Mo-ti, or as some of the Western authors call him,

Micius. Like many other philosophers of his time, neither his life nor the dates of his birth and death may be ascertained and verified at present. From internal evidences of the book ascribed to him, some Chinese scholars have calculated that Micius was born somewhere around 500 B.C. and died about seventy or eighty years later.[1] Though this is but a conjecture, it is within probability and worthy of attention. According to this calculation, Micius appeared on the stage at the very juncture when Confucianism began to prevail. To one who is well-versed in the controversies between the two schools, nothing can be of more importance than the revelation of that fact. For the whole philosophy of Micius is nothing but an adoption of Confucian ideals combined with a repudiation of Confucian methods and a substitution of his own to attain those ideals.

The characteristic which marks the difference between Micianism and other Chinese political philosophies of this period is its religious background. It is not like Taoism which finds its basis upon a mystic and intangible Way. Nor does it resemble at all in this respect Confucianism, which weaves its ethical threads entirely around the activities of men. On the contrary, Micius believes in the existence of a personal God, enthroned in high Heaven and supported by

[1] See S. Hu, "History of Chinese Philosophy," Vol. I, p. 147.

myriads of spirits, whose will it is to be obeyed and whose majesty is to be dreaded. It is He who created the world. It is He who rules all. States and governments are only established for His convenience. Sovereigns are made simply for the benefit of His people. Thus says Micius:

> "In ancient times God and the spirits founded states and cities and erected chiefs and judges, not because they desired to elevate them to high rank, gratify them with emoluments, and place them in indulgent positions of honor and wealth, but because they wanted them to establish what is beneficiary to the milliard people, to do away with what is pernicious to them, to ennoble the humble, to enrich the poor, and to restore order and peace to states in danger and confusion."[1]

Such being the origin and predestination of the sovereigns of states, it is necessary for them to observe the divine law. In the first place, like many other religious beliefs, the God of Micianism is a jealous deity. He exacts absolute and unwavering obedience to His will, and inflicts punishment upon whomever may be recalcitrant. To this effect speaks Micius:

> "If God be not obeyed, there will be no end of calamities. Hence, heat and cold may not come in their regular seasons; snow and frost, rain and dew may not fall at proper times; the five kinds of grain may not ripen; the six kinds of cattle may not thrive; plague and epidemics, violent rains and shocking storms may light upon the earth one after another. All these are punishments from Heaven. They are inflicted upon men because they do not agree with God."[2]

[1] Chap. 12.
[2] *Ibid.*

In addition, however, there is a more earthly reason for the sovereigns of states to observe the divine will. Every going concern needs a working rule; and in the government of a state, Micius holds, no rule can be better than to follow the law of God. He explains:

> "Whoever pursues a business in this world must have a system. A business which has attained success without a system does not exist. From ministers and generals down to the hundreds of craftsmen, every one of them has a system. The craftsmen employ the ruler to make a square and the compass to make a circle. All of them, both skilled and unskilled, use this system. The skilled may at times accomplish a circle and a square by their own dexterity. But with a system, even the unskilled may achieve the same result, though dexterity they have none. Hence, every craftsman possesses a system as a model. Now, if we govern the empire, or a large state, without a system as a model, are we not even less intelligent than a common craftsman?"[1]

The trend of Micius' argument is clear. After having given the above illustration, he asks this question, "What should be used as a model for government?" He answers himself, "The Law of God."[2]

But what is the composition of this divine law? It is in answering this question that Micius shows how greatly he is influenced by the Confucian philosophy. For what forms the fundamental canons of Confucianism is also incorporated here as the basic principles of the law of God. In other words, Micius believes as Confucius does

[1] Chap. 4
[2] *Ibid.*

that there are only two rules for human relationship—justice and love. About justice, he says:

"What does God like, and what does he dislike? He likes justice and dislikes injustice. Now, if only we can lead the people of the world to pursue justice, then we will be doing what God likes. If we do what God likes, God will also do what we like."[1]

This well illustrates both the similarity and difference of Confucius and Micius. Their ideals are alike; but their ways of approaching them are divergent. While Confucius, as we shall see later, gathers his principle of justice entirely from a philosophical discussion of the nature of men, Micius attributes it to a divine origin and contrives to embellish and strengthen it with the glory and power of an omnipotent god. Thus he continues:

"How do we know that God likes justice and dislikes injustice? Because in the world those who practice justice live and those who do not die. Those who practice justice are rich and those who do not are poor; and wherever there is justice, there is order, and wherever there is not, there is confusion; therefore, I know that God likes justice and dislikes injustice."[2]

As for love, it receives an even greater emphasis from Micius than justice. He says:

"God desires men to love and benefit each other, and does not desire men to hate and hurt each other. How do I know that it is so? Because God himself loves all and benefits all. How do I know that God loves all and benefits all? Because He creates and nourishes all."[3]

[1] Chap. 26.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Chap. 4.

The religious fervour of this doctrine is self-evident. It is even more fully displayed in the evidences which Micius offers to prove the love of God.

> "There are reasons why I know that God loves men dearly. He makes the sun, the moon, and the stars to guide and to shine upon men. He creates the four seasons —spring, summer, autumn and winter—to regulate their affairs. He causes snow, frost, rain, and dewdrops to fall and the five kinds of grain to grow, so that men may become comfortable and well to do. . . . He establishes princes, dukes, and other feudal lords so that the virtuous among men may be rewarded and the evil may be punished." [1]

Such a passage leads one almost to think that Micius is more of a religious founder than a simple philosopher, and helps us at least to distinguish clearly the divergent sources of Confucianism and Micianism.

Justice and love, then, are the ordinances of Heaven for men to observe and for governments to enforce. But how will the people be led to observe, and the governments be enabled to enforce them? First, in regard to the establishment of justice in a state, Micius enunciates the theory of a community of standards. By this he means that in a state the people as a whole should share not only some common interest, but both the government and the governed altogether should be made to have common tastes, common ideals, and common criterions by which to

[1] Chap. 27.

adjudicate right and wrong. In turn, these tastes, ideals, and criterions should also be made to agree with the fundamental principle of the divine law, that is, justice. In this way, Micius holds, a twofold harvest may be reaped. On the one hand, God will be delighted at the faithful observance of His covenant on the part of men, and thus ever ready to continue His blessings. On the other, a thorough understanding and true concord between the governed and the government may be brought about, and hence good government will be the result. Says Micius:

"The business of a wise man to is know and to do what is conducive to good government, and to know and avoid what is conducive to confusion. What is conducive to good government? If the government understands the sentiments of the governed, good government will be assured. If not, confusion will ensue. How do I know? When the government understands the sentiments of the governed, it knows clearly of what the people approve and disapprove. When it knows of what the people approve and disapprove, it will be able to reward the good and punish the evil. When the good are rewarded and the evil are punished, then good government is assured. Otherwise, if the government does not know clearly of what the people approve and disapprove, it will not be able to reward the good and punish the evil. If the good are not rewarded and the evil are not punished, confusion will certainly ensue. Hence, in distributing rewards and inflicting punishments, it is necessary to understand the sentiments of the people. How is it possible, then, to understand the sentiments of the people? Answers Micius, only when a community of standards of justice is established, is it possible."[1]

[1] Chap. 13.

To prove that a community of standards is necessary for good government, Micius falls back upon a discussion of the origin of the state. According to him, confusion existed before the establishment of the state on account of the lack of a community of standards, and the state was established simply for the purpose of forming such a community and thus maintain order and peace. He alleges:

> "In ancient times, when the people had just been created and when neither government nor law was established, everyone had a different principle of conduct. Thus, one man had one principle, two men had two principles, and ten men had ten principles. As men became more numerous, so the more numerous became the principles. As everyone considered his principle right and others' principles wrong, so they mutually wronged one another. Hence, even between father and son and among brothers there was dislike and hatred, separation and dispersion; and then the people of the world would all hurt each other with water and fire and poison, so that even if they had surplus energy, they would not use it to help others; even if they had superfluous wealth, they would not divide it with others; and even if they had wisdom and craft, they would not share them with others. There was great confusion in the world; and men were like beasts." [1]

It was to remedy such a dire situation that statecraft came into existence. Like the earliest political conceptions, which we outlined in our first chapter, Micius holds that the emperor was elected by the people in the beginning as being the most virtuous of men. After the election, he began to organize the government, appoint his

[1] Chap. 11.

assistants, divide the empire, and establish the different feudal states. The system itself is not remarkable; but the procedure for cultivating a community of standards in the state, such as Micius narrates below, is very noteworthy:

> "After the government has been completely organized, the emperor promulgates to the people of the empire this order, saying: 'Whenever you hear good and evil, you must report them to the sovereign. Of what the sovereign approves, you must approve. Of what the sovereign disapproves you must also disapprove. When the sovereign is faulty, it is your duty to remonstrate with him. When an inferior is virtuous, you must recommend him. They who form a community with their superior and do not form parties among the inferiors are those whom the sovereign shall reward and the people praise. As for those who do not report good and evil to the sovereign whenever they hear of them, who do not approve what the sovereign approves, and do not disapprove what the sovereign disapproves, who do not remonstrate with the sovereign when he is faulty, who do not recommend an inferior when he is virtuous, and who do not form a community with the sovereign, but parties among the inferiors; such people are those whom the sovereign shall punish and the people condemn.'" [1]

After the emperor, the princes of the feudal states and the magistrates of districts in their turn issue orders to the same effect.[2] The whole purpose of the system is nothing but to produce a community of standards between the government and the governed. As we have already shown before, that it is the duty of the sovereign to follow the will of God, so it may be also said here that the purpose of this contrivance is to direct

[1] Chap. 11.
[2] Chaps. 11 and 13.

the people to obey the principle of justice as ordained by the divine law.

When such a community of standards is established between the government and the governed, not only will the distribution of justice be correct and infallible, but it will also be quick and sure. In a sense, this is not unlike that theory of the legalists which holds that law should be made so clear in the people's minds that it will be enforced by themselves. Only in Micius' theory, there is more dependence upon reason than upon force. While the legalists wish only for the people to know that such and such is the law and must be obeyed, Micius appears to desire that the people be taught not only what the law is, but also why it should be so. When the people understand all these things they will help to carry the laws of the sovereign into execution; and good and efficient government may be guaranteed. Thus Micius affirms:

"In ancient times because the sage-kings were able to bestow upon the people a community of standards, there was thorough undertanding between the superior and the inferior. Whenever the superior possessed some benefit, the people would be profited by it. Whenever the inferiors suffered from any evil, the sovereign would be able to do away with it. Hence, even if beyond ten thousand miles there should be a man who practiced virtue, before his conduct could be completely known within his own family and district, the emperor would be able to hear of it and reward him. Or even if beyond ten thousand miles there should be a man who practiced evil, before his conduct could be completely known with his own family and district, the emperor would be able to hear of it and punish

him. Thus all the people in the Empire were afraid of his majesty and dared not be excessive, saying, 'Truly godlike is our Emperor in seeing and hearing.'

"But the ancient emperors said: 'Godlike we are not, we only employ others' eyes and ears to help us see and hear. We only employ others' lips to help us talk. We only employ others' minds to help us think. And we only employ others' limbs to help us work, When there are many who help us see and hear, we can see and hear far. When there are many who help us talk, we can talk readily. When there are many who help us think, we can think fast. When there are many who help us work, we can easily achieve success!' Hence, there is no other reason why the sage-emperors of ancient times were able to accomplish great feats and earn lasting fame but this: They could establish a community of standards in governing their states."[1]

The advantage of Micius' theory over that of the legalists is clear. While the people under the rule of the legalists may be compelled, at the point of the bayonet, to carry the law into execution, they may not have faith in the law deep in their hearts. But under the regime of Micius' philosophy, the case will be different. The people will know not only *what* the laws are, but also *why* they are. They will not obey them under compulsion, but they will willingly lend their hand to the government in the execution of them. Thus the foundation of efficiency in the Mician government is much more solid than that in the legalistic scheme. In other words, in spite of all the contrivances of the Legalists, their system of punishment and reward may produce no more effect than what may be produced in

[1] Chap. 12.

particular cases, while the laws under the Mician rule will not only reward the good and punish the evil upon certain occasions, but will also be able to encourage further good and arrest further evil. Micius explains:

> "If there is no community of standards between the superior and the inferior, reward and praise will not be effective in encouraging good, and punishment and condemnation will not be effective in arresting evil. How do I know? . . . If there is no such community of standards between the superior and the inferior, then those who are rewarded by the sovereign may also be those who are disapproved of by the people. . . . In such an event, the rewards will not be sufficient to encourage further good. On the other hand, since there is no such community of standards between the superior and the inferior, those who are punished by the sovereign may also be those who are lauded by the people. . . In such a cases, the punishments cannot arrest further evil. . .
>
> If in a state wherein neither the rewards of its government can encourage good nor its punishment arrest evil, has it not then reverted to the original state of chaos, such as I have described before?" [1]

Here again we find a similarity between Micianism and Confucianism. Neither wants the people merely to obey the law; both want the people to understand and approve of the law. They do not wish to enforce the law by sheer force; but they aim to enforce it by the help of public opinion. These principles form the foundation of justice in both philosophies.

But turning to love, we find that the gap between Micianism and Confucianism is wider

[1] Chap. 12.

than before. While Confucius, as we shall disclose later in greater detail, advocates a doctrine of benevolence which starts at home and gradually spreads abroad, imbued with a fervent religious zeal, Micius considers humanity as a whole and preaches universal love. Hence, the appeal of Micius is more ardent, and his doctrine is more poignant. He commences his teaching with a compassionate survey of the world of his time. He sees everywhere war, bloodshed, confusion, and strife. His pious heart bleeds with pity; and he asks himself this question, "Why must all these things be?" And he answers, "Because of the lack of love."

> "As the sage makes it his business to govern the world, he must know the origin of confusion in order to reform it. If he does not know the origin of confusion, he will not be able to reform it. For instance, one who tries to cure a disease must know where the disease comes from. If he does not know where the disease comes from, he will not be able to cure it. This is the same with confusion. . . .
>
> Whence then comes confusion? It comes from the lack of mutual love."[1]

"The lack of mutual love," therefore, is the box of Pandora from which flows out all evil. Every trouble may be ascribed to it, and every disorder has its origin in it.

> "The infidelity of subjects and sons towards their sovereigns and fathers—that is what is called confusion. Because the sons love themselves and do not love their fathers, they try to secure advantages for themselves at

[1] Chap. 14.

their fathers' expense. Because the subjects love themselves and do not love their sovereigns, they try to secure advantages for themselves at their sovereigns' expense. Hence the confusion. Moreover, confusion will also arise if fathers do not love their sons and sovereigns do not love their subjects. As the fathers love themselves and do not love their sons, they will secure advantages for themselves at the expense of their sons. As the sovereigns love themselves and do not love their subjects, they will secure advantages for themselves at the expense of their subjects. Why is it so? It is all because they do not love each other.

So it is even with the bandits and thieves of the world. Thieves love their own families and do not love others' families. So they steal from others in order to benefit their own. Bandits love themselves and do not love others. So they kill others in order to benefit themselves. All this is because of the lack of mutual love.

In addition, the same principle may be applied to the feuds among great families and wars among feudal states. Each family loves itself and does not love others; so it embroils others for its own benefit. Each state loves itself and does not love others; so it attacks others for its own advantage. These are all the phases of confusion; and upon investigation, they are all found to originate in the lack of mutual love."[1]

Since such is the origin of confusion, what can be the natural remedy but to fill the want of humanity and make all the people love one another? Thus Micius continues:

"Since we disapprove of the lack of mutual love, what shall we then substitute for it? Say I, 'We shall substitute for it the principle of mutual love and reciprocal helpfulness."[2]

But how is this principle going to work out? What should be used as its guiding rule? In

[1] Chap. 14.
[2] Chap. 15.

answering these questions, Micius comes close to one of the fundamental teachings of Christianity —"Love they neighbor as thyself."

> "How shall we accomplish our principle of mutual love and reciprocal helpfulness? I answer, 'Consider another's country as your own country. Consider another's family as your own family. Consider another's person as your own person.'"[1]

If this principle gains thoroughly the ears of humanity, Micius believes, as many others do, that a paradise may be made of this fallen earth. All evil and strife will vanish with the disappearance of its source, and the whole world will rejoice in peace and happiness. Thus he explains:

> "If all the people under Heaven practice the principle and love others as they love themselves, is it possible for there to be any infidelity on the part of the sons and subjects, or of any oppression on the part of the fathers and sovereigns? As the fathers and sovereigns consider the persons of the sons and subjects as their own persons, how can an act of oppression take place? As the sons and subjects consider the persons of their fathers and sovereigns as their own persons, there will be no possibility of infidelity. Moreover, can there be any occasion of theft and banditry? As everyone considers others' houses as his own, who will steal? As everyone considers others' persons as his own, who will rob? Hence, there will be no theft or banditry. Furthermore, can feuds among families thrive and wars among states occur under such a regime? When every family loves other families as its own, who will start confusion? When every country loves other countries as itself, who will begin a struggle? Hence, there can be neither feuds among families nor war among states."[2]

But Micius knows well that the difficulty of his problem lies not in convincing the people of the

[1] Chap. 15.
[2] Chap. 14.

theoretical cogency of his principle, but in making them believe that it is practicable. Many would have offered their left cheeks after their right ones had been smitten, had they only been assured that such a practice would unerringly lead to a stopping of their foe's smiting; but few have done so, simply because most of us are prone to think that the practice will amount to nothing but tomfoolery which can attain for us no other result than further harm. This opinion, of course, is not shared by Micius.

> "But it is said by the scholars of the world nowadays, 'It is true that the principle of mutual love is good. But it is impracticable. To follow it would simply be like crossing a river with a mountain under one's arms!' I answer, 'This is not a true simile. As for crossing a river with a mountain under one's arms, it may be said to be a task that will exhaust all possible strength and yet achieve no results. From ancient down to the modern times, no one has accomplished such a feat. But when we compare it to the principle of mutual love and reciprocal helpfulness, we find them different.'"[1]

What are their differences? The first one which Micius suggests is not of great importance. While he admits that no one has ever crossed a river with a mountain under his arms, Micius holds that the principle of mutual love has been practiced by the sage-kings of the ancient times, such as Yü the Great, King Wen, and King Wu. But this argument, as we have already shown in the previous chapter, has been

[1] Chap. 15.

greatly ridiculed by the Legalists. The latter contend that though the principle of Micius may at one time have been carried out successfully by the wise men of olden days, yet he who preaches it now must be a laughingstock to the modern sages who have discovered altered circumstances and invented new ways.

The second difference, however, which Micius finds between his principle and that impossible task of crossing a river with a mountain, is more significant by far. He appears to believe that, while there are limitations to our physical strength, there is no limit to our spiritual development. The only obstacle that prevents the carrying out of his principle is not found in any inherent impracticability in the theory itself, but in the inertia of men to act according to it. If men only will that they follow the principle, they will be able to do it and reap a harvest of immeasurable value. Thus he alleges:

"The scholars of the world have failed to understand the desirability and the nature of my principle. Now, take the besieging of a city, or fighting in the field, in both of which men kill themselves in order to gain fame. These have been considered by the people of the world to be difficult. But as the sovereigns love them, so the masses achieve them. To return to the principle of mutual love and reciprocal helpfulness, is it different? He who loves others will be loved by others. He who benefits others will be benefitted by others. He who hates others will be hated by others. He who harms others will be harmed by others. What is the difficulty in this theory? The only impediment in the way of its realization is, therefore, not in the theory itself, but in

this: The sovereigns have not employed it as a principle of government; and the people have not used it as a rule for the regulation of their conduct." [1]

But there is still the contention left that the practice of this principle will lead only to further harm to be borne by the one who practices it. In order to combat this argument, Micius enters into a long defense which we must detail in his own words below:

"There is nothing that is good and yet impracticable. Let us, therefore, compare the principle of mutual love and its opposite theory. Let us suppose here two men, one practicing the principle, and the other not. The one who does not practice it says, 'How is it possible for me to look after my friend's welfare as my own and to look after the welfare of my friend's parents as the welfare of my own parents?' So when he finds them cold, he will not clothe them. When he finds them sick and disabled, he will not help and comfort them. And when he finds death among them, he will not bury their dead for them. Such is the conduct of the man who practices a principle other than that of mutual love. But as for the one who practices the principle of mutual love, he is different both in words and in deeds. Says he, 'I have heard that he who wants to be a gentleman must look after his friend's welfare as his own, and the welfare of their parents as that of his own parents.' Hence, when he finds them hungry, he will feed them. When he finds them cold, he will clothe them. When he finds them sick and disabled, he will help and comfort them. And when he finds death among them, he will bury their dead for them. Such, then, are the words and the deeds of the one who practices the principle of mutual love. . .

Now, I shall ask a question. Suppose a war is raging in the broad field, and you are armed and mounted and ordered to join it, and you do not know whether you will come back dead or alive. Or, suppose you are sent on a distant mission into the regions of savages and barbarians,

[1] Chap. 15.

and you do not know whether or not you will be able to turn from the journey at all. In such events, let me ask you, to whom will you intrust your estate, your dependents, your wife and your children? Are you going to intrust them to the man who practices the principle of mutual love, or to the man who practices otherwise? Even the simplest men and women in the world, though they may condemn the principle of mutual love now, will not hesitate to intrust themselves and their families to the one who practices the principle. Now then, while in speech they may be against the principle of mutual love, in practical selection they will prefer it. Is not this a clear case of self-contradiction? Therefore, because of this, I do not know why the scholars of the world who have heard of the principle of mutual love can continue to disapprove of it."[1]

To apply the same argument to states, Micius gives the following discussion:

"Yet there is still no end of contending on the part of the scholars of the world who disapprove of the principle of mutual love. They declare that though the principle may be followed by an ordinary person, it may not be followed by rulers of states. Let us then imagine two rulers, one practicing the principle of mutual love and the other not. Says the ruler who does not practice it, 'How can I consider the welfare of my ten thousand subjects as my own! This is not human nature. Too short already is life for happiness; it is like driving four galloping horses across a crevasse!' So when he finds his sujects hungry, he will not feed them. When he finds them cold, he will not clothe them. When he finds them sick and disabled, he will not help and comfort them. And when he finds death among them, he will not bury their dead for them. Such are the words and deeds of the ruler who practices a principle other than that of mutual love. But both the words and the deeds of the ruler who follow the principle are different. Says he, 'I have heard that he wants to be an intelligent sovereign of the world must consider the welfare of the people before his own.' Hence, when he

[1] Chap. 16.

finds his subjects hungry, he will feed them. When he finds them cold, he will clothe them. When he finds them sick and disabled, he will help and comfort them. And when he finds death among them, he will bury their dead for them. Such are the words and deeds of the ruler who practices the principle of mutual love.

Now, suppose a famine or pestilence is preying upon the people, and those who have died of cold and hunger, in ditches and in fields, are a multitude. I do not know under whose rule the people would like to intrust themselves. At such a time, I believe that even the simplest men and women of the world, though they may condemn the policy of the ruler who practices the principle of mutual love, will not hesitate to intrust themselves to his rule. Thus, while in words they may oppose the principle of mutual love, in deeds they prefer it. This is clearly a self-contradiction. I do not know, therefore, what can be the reason at all for the world's condemnation of the principle of mutual love after having heard of it."[1]

In addition, Micius attempts to meet the contention of some Confucianists who hold that the principle of mutual love is in opposition to their principle of filiality. If everybody loves others' parents as their own, they argue, how is it possible for sons to show their special respect and lovingness towards their fathers? According to them, filiality is the fundamental pillar of the family system as well as of the state. If filiality does not exist, disobedience of inferiors of their superiors will naturally ensue, and confusion will begin to devour the world. As Micius advocates a principle of universal love, they fear that it may wreck the basis of filiality and thus bring

[1] Chap. 16.

not order, but chaos, into government. To this argument Micius gives this rebuttal:

> "I have thought of this from the very standpoint of its essentials. I do not know whether a filial son, in taking care of his parents' welfare, wishes others to love and benefit his parents or to hate and harm them. From the angle of reason, it must be the former and not the latter. Now, if one really wishes others to love and benefit his parents, where should he begin in order to realize his wish? Should he not begin with loving and benefitting others' parents so that others may love and benefit also his own? Or should he hate and harm others' parents in order to secure the fulfilment of his desire?"[1]

In short, Micius believes that as you do unto others so will others do unto you. The greatest compensation for loving others is to be beloved yourself. If an individual loves others as he loves himself, he will earn gratitude. If a ruler loves his subjects as he loves himself, his government will have the full confidence of the people. They will not only help to uphold justice in the state, but they will also follow every endeavor of their sovereign with a ready obedience and a loving pleasantness.

From this principle of mutual love, two sequels naturally develop. The first of them is the doctrine of service, or, in the words of Micius, reciprocal helpfulness. Says he, "The business of love is to establish what is beneficial to the world and to do away with what is injurious. One must always be ready to promote whatever

[1] Chap. 16.

may benefit others, and put an end to whatever may injure them."[1] Again he declares, "What is the way of virtue but this: He who has strength is anxious to help others. He who has wealth is eager to divide it with others. And he who has wisdom is desirous of teaching others."[2] Thus Micius' theory is of a very positive character. He is not satisfied only with cultivating virtue in his own person; but he must attempt to cultivate whatever he finds good in everyone else.

A further ramification of the doctrine of service is possible. In the first place, Micius considers it the first duty of a government to secure the material welfare of its people. Says he:

> "In ancient times, that the sage-emperors succeeded in attaining imperial dignity and subjugating the feudal lords was because they loved the people dearly, benefited the people greatly, taught them with loyalty and sincerity, and instructed them in ways of material well-being. Hence, they were reverenced throughout their lives, and cherished in posterity."[3]

Also we read:

> "When the harvest of one kind of grain fails, we have a scarcity. When the harvest of two kinds of grain fails, we have a drought. When the harvest of three kinds of grain fails, we have an affliction. When the harvest of four kinds of grain fails, we have a disaster. When the harvest of five kinds of grain fails, we have a famine. When the five kinds of grain all fail to ripen, we have a great calamity. When scarcity occurs in a year, all the officers of the state, beginning with the ministers, will be

[1] Chap. 32.
[2] Chap. 10.
[3] Chap. 21.

deprived of one-fifth of their emolument. When a drought occurs, two-fifths of their emolument will be taken from them. In the case of an affliction, three-fifths; in the case of a disaster, four-fifths. In the case of famine and great calamity, they will be given no emolument but rations instead." [1]

This shows clearly how Micius likes to have his government share the fortunes of the governed. He does not only want it to help the people in times of prosperity; but he wants it to divide burdens with its subjects in times of adversity. In one word, he desires sovereigns to consider the welfare of their people as their own.

From the above, one is almost led to think that Micius is apt to develop an extremely materialistic theory that cannot be satisfied with anything but endless progress into the world of material well-being. But this is not so. On the contrary, because he loves his people so well, he is not disposed to compel them to work beyond what is necessary to give them sufficient subsistence. Says Micius:

"In ancient times the sage-emperors developed a system of economy, which ruled that all the numerous craftsmen of the world—wheel-makers, boat-makers, potters, and carpenters, etc., must endeavor to do whatever they can, that they should produce enough goods to supply the need of the country, but that nothing beyond the need should be produced, which would only waste the energy of the people and not benefit them." [2]

The Mician doctrine of service is, therefore, two-fold. On the one hand, it exhorts the people to

[1] Chap. 5.
[2] Chap. 21.

help each other in every way possible, and demands that the government pay full attention to the material welfare of the people. On the other, it teaches men to be frugal in their own expenditures, and advises the government to disallow unnecessary luxuries on the part of its subjects. Thus, to Micius, men should eat nothing savory or fanciful but just enough to keep their bodies and souls together. They should wear nothing of curious design or attractive fabric but simple plain clothes that are just sufficient to keep them warm.[1] As the degraded Confucianists of the time laid special stress upon the ceremonies of burial and mourning which became exceedingly exhausting and expensive, Micius launched a campaign against them and denounced them as wasteful of energy and wealth.[2] As music was considered by orthodox Confucianists to be one of the most important instruments ever invented by human ingenuity to harmonize the nature of men, Micius gave utterance to his opposition and condemned it as useless and unnecessary.[3] As his contemporary rulers were all inclined to concentrate wealth in themselves and were given over to pleasantry and indulgence, Micius launched a tirade against them and advised them to practice self-denial. Thus:

"When a benevolent man looks after the welfare of the world, he does not seek what his eyes consider beautiful,

[1] Chap. 21.
[2] Chap. 25.
[3] Chap. 32.

what his ears consider pleasant, what his tongue consider tasty, and what his body considers comfortable. He does nothing that gratifies his own desires and which may rob the people of their needs." [1]

As for the second sequel of Micius' principle of mutual love, it is within our expectation that it should be his denunciation of war. His trend of thought naturally affords this denunciation many arguments. In the first place, war is a matter which is a direct affront to his concepts of justice and love. We shall at length here quote a passage of his:

"Now, imagine a man crawling into a garden to steal some of its fruit. When the people hear of it, they will disapprove of him. When the government seizes him, it will punish him. Why is this? Because he injures others in order to benefit himself. When it comes to stealing from others, dogs, pigs, or chickens, the injustice of the man who does such things is even greater than the man who crawls into a garden and steals its fruit. Why? Because the more he injures others, the more wanting is he in love, and the greater is his crime.

When it comes to forcing one's way into others stables and robbing them of horses and cattle, the man will be still less just and benevolent than the one who steals dogs, pigs, or chicken. Why? Because he injures others more. If he injures others more, he is all the more uncharitable, and his crime is thus greater.

Again, when it comes to killing an innocent person and seizing his garments and coats, his halberd and his sword, the injustice of the man who does it is still greater than the one who forces his way into others' stables and robs them of horses and cattle. Why? Because the more he injures others, the more wanting is he in love, and the greater is his crime.

All these the rulers of the world know and condemn as unjust. But when it comes to warring with other

[1] Chap. 32.

states, they do not know and condemn, but approve of it instead and call it just. Can they be spoken of as understanding the difference between justice and injustice?

When you kill one man, you are condemned as unjust and you are sentenced to suffer the penalty of death. Now, if we view things from this standpoint, when one kills ten men, he should be condemned as ten times unjust and sentenced to suffer ten times the penalty of death. When one kills a hundred men, he should be condemned as a hundred times injust and sentenced to suffer a hundred times the penalty of death. All such things the scholars of the world know and do so condemn. But when it comes to the greater injustice of warring against other states, they do not condemn, but approve of it instead and call it just. Can they be spoken of as understanding at all the difference between justice and injustice?" [1]

In the second place, war is, according to Micius, a crime against his God and spirits. It attacks and kills cities and men, all ordained by the deity above. It overthrows states that have been established by Him; it plunders things that are destined for His sacrifice; it demolishes temples that are erected for His worship. In a word, it benefits neither God nor the spirits.

Nor, in the third place, does war benefit men. It is extremely wasteful. It alters the regular course of peace; it takes men from their ordinary pursuits. It is, therefore, against Micius' doctrine of economy. Moreover, force is not a safe instrument to depend upon. He who is skilled in the sword generally dies by the sword. War breeds war; and from constant fighting none may emerge totally unscathed. Hence, says Micius: "In

[1] Chap. 17.
[2] Chap. 19.

ancient times, whenever a benevolent man appeared on the earth, he never failed to preach against war."[1]

These, then, are the principal theories of Micius. Inspired by a religious zeal and fastening his faith upon a divine law, he preaches the ideal of justice and love. To promulgate justice, he advocates the establishment of a community of standards between the government and the governed. To glorify love, he teaches the doctrine of mutual helpfulness and denounces war. It is, therefore, clear that his theories are directly opposed to those of the Legalists. Not to speak of minor differences, they are widely apart from each other in their fundamental starting points. While one believes in the practicability of fear, the other is convinced of the desirability of love. While one considers it fitting and proper to strengthen the government by exploiting the weakness of its subjects, the other laments the degradation of men and thinks it best to harmonize the world by perfecting humanity. Thus, in carrying their principles into actual practice, we find them also totally different. While the Legalists believe in government by law, Micius follows the footsteps of Confucius and preaches government by men. Therefore, says Micius, "The exaltation of the virtuous — that is the very foundation of government."[2]

[1] Chap. 19.
[2] Chap. 8.

But why is government by men necessary to Micius' scheme? The reason is found in the principle that to make others love one, one must love them first. As you do unto others, so will others do unto you. If the government or the sovereign does not follow the principle of mutual love in the first place, how, then, can the subjects be expected not to imitate his example? Moreover, Micius has a thorough understanding of the capabilities of social environment in molding the characters of men. If the atmosphere of a state is polluted at the very top of honor and position, it will only be natural for the rest to suffer the evil of contamination. Thus, when Micius saw a dyer of silk, he said with a sigh: "Alas, that which is dyed with blue turns blue. That which is dyed with yellow turns yellow. As what it associates with varies, so its color changes. . . How cautiously then must the dyeing be done! But this is not only true with the dyeing of silk; even states have their dyeings."[1] This doctrine he expands further:

> "How do I know that the exaltation of the virtuous is the foundation of government? I answer, if you let the noble and the wise conduct the government, then good government is assured; if you let the mean and the stupid conduct the government, then confusion ensues. Hence, I know that the exaltation of the virtuous is the foundation of government."[2]

How then will the virtuous be exalted? This Micius proposes to accomplish by two means.

[1] Chap. 3.
[2] Chap. 9.

First, he advises rulers to award honors and positions only to those who are meritorious. Let no personal likes and dislikes interfere with such affairs, and the ruler will be able to secure virtuous men for his offices. Says he:

> "Even if the sovereign is compassionate, he should not love an officer who possesses no merit. Even if the father is loving, he should not love a son who is good for nothing."[1]

Again,

> "The sage hears one's words, investigates his conduct, and finds out his capabilities, and then takes pains to give him a fitting office. This is called proficiency in business. Thus, he who can rule a feudal state is given a feudal state; he who can head a department is given a department; he who can govern a district is given a district. All these who are given states, departments, and districts, are, therefore, the virtuous people of the empire."[2]

As for the second means of exalting the virtuous, Micius advises the ruler to be always on the alert to watch for them. Whenever they are discovered, they must be treated with special reverence so that men of their like may be attracted to offer their services to him. This is called by Micius the assembling of the virtuous. Says he:

> "What is the method of assembling the virtuous? I say, if we desire to assemble together in the state all who are skilled in archery and charioteering, we must enrich them, honor them, respect them, and praise them first

[1] Chap. 1.
[2] Chap. 9.

before we can assemble them. How then shall we deal with the virtuous, cultivated in rectitude, learned in conversation, broad in wisdom, who are the pride of the state and pillars of government? Must we not also enrich them, honor them, respect them, and praise them first before we can assemble them?"[1]

Also we read:

"In ancient times the sages, in conducting government, never failed to exalt the virtuous. Even if they be found among farmers and craftsmen, they will be elevated. Their position shall be made high; their emolument great. They shall be intrusted with affairs, and given the power to command. For if their position is not high, the people will not revere them. If their emolument is not great, the people will not have confidence in them. If they do not have the power to command, the people will not fear them. These three things are all granted to the virtuous, not for their own sakes, but in order to achieve successes."[2]

By such means Micius believes that the virtuous may be assembled in a state. When these principles are followed, he further holds that the state will no doubt achieve good government.

"Those who are well-versed in rulership take great pains in the choice of men, but find ease in the management of affairs. As for those who do not know the art of rulership, the more they assiduously apply themselves to state affairs, the more they weary their bodies and souls, the more their state will be placed in jeopardy, and the more their names will be defiled by disgrace."[3]

Thus we have completed our analysis of the political philosophy of Micius, taking it from his conception of a divine law down to his emphasis

[1] Chap. 8.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Chap. 3.

of government by men. In many respects we find his theories not unlike the teachings of Christ. In both there is a faith in supernatural power. Again, in both there is the preaching of universal love. Nor does the resemblance between the two stop here. In addition, both of them did live up to their own standards and attempted to spread abroad their principles by the sheer force of their personal practice. Thus, while Christ died for his teachings on a cross, Micius devoted his whole life, not to honor and wealth, but to the preaching of his doctrines of mutual love and reciprocal helpfulness. It is recorded in his book that he journeyed at one time for ten days and ten nights in order to persuade the ruler of one state to stop his preparations for an attack upon another.[1] It is also said of him that he followed the example of Yü the Great and worked so hard for the benefit of others that not a hair was left on his shanks.[2] Truly, whatever little result such a man may have achieved, he cannot but earn our greatest reverence.

Again, like Christ, Micius was a philosopher who realized the practical difficulties of his problem. He felt keenly conscious of the fact that his theory might have been a little beyond the people of his time. It called for self-denial on the one hand and unstinting service on the other. It was just a little too difficult for human

[1] Chap. 50.
[2] Chwangtze, Chap. 33.

nature. And yet in spite of this consciousness, he did try his best to achieve the impossible. Of such a course of conduct, it is hard indeed for us to disapprove. We cannot conclude, therefore, without quoting a passage to this effect from his own book:

> "Micius went from Lu to Ch'i. He met up with an old acquaintance, who said to him, 'The whole world is not practicing righteousness. Why should you alone deny yourself so much to practice it? It is better for you to stop!'
>
> "Answered Micius, 'If there is a man who has ten sons and only one of them farms while the other nine are given over to indolence, must not the one son who farms work all the harder? Why? Because the number of the people who eat is many, and the number of the people who farm is small. Now, when the world is not practicing righteousness, you should urge me to practice harder. Why should you stop me?'"[1]

Verily, such a spirit, ever striving for an ideal and never tending to yield, is above both our censure and our praise.

[1] Chap. 47.

CHAPTER X

CONFUCIUS AND CONFUCIANISM

THE life of Confucius, the most revered sage in China, is like that of Micius and of Christ. His is also one that is spent in the vain endeavor to convert the people of his time to the belief in and practice of what he deems right. He was born in 551 and died in 479 B.C. Bred in poverty, he was forced early to struggle for a livelihood. But inspired by an ardent zeal for knowledge, even at the unripe age of fifteen, he determined to "bend his mind to learning."[1] He studied various subjects under different teachers of renown. He made a special journey to the imperial court of Chow to observe and examine the grandeur of the ancient Empire.[2] Soon his fame began to spread, and he chose teaching as his profession. It is recorded that the total number of students that followed him finally reached the round sum of three thousand. But the sage's mind was never satisfied with mere teaching; he was longing all the time to see his principles carried into actual practice for the benefit of the whole world. So when at last an opportunity came to him in 500 B.C., he accepted without hesitation from the duke of his native

1 "Analects," Book II, Chap. 4.
2 "Records of History," "Life of Confucius."

state, Loo, the magistracy of the town of Chung-Tu. He caused different kinds of food to be served to the old and to the young, and different burdens to be assigned to the strong and to the weak. It was said that within a very short time his moral influence became so powerful that under his jurisdiction none would take anything lost on the road and every house left its gate open at night.[1] He was then promoted to the ministry of crime. While the appointment alone was said to have been sufficient to put an end to all evil inside the state, Confucius entered into the confidence of the duke and became the guiding hand for the government of Loo. Externally, he won for it a diplomatic victory by making the state of Ch'i return to it an unjustly occupied tract of territory. Internally, he strengthened the central government by persuading several formidable clans that had been a constant menace to the ducal sway to destroy their redoubtable castles. Thus groundwork was laid for a good and efficient government; and the time seemed ripe for the sage to put all his principles into execution. But dark clouds had already gathered on the horizon; and Confucius, instead of realizing his lifelong ambition, was destined to pass thirteen long years in weary, toilsome wandering. The Duke of Ch'i had watched the political development of his neighbor with apprehension,

[1] "Records of History," "Life of Confucius."

and now sought to alienate Confucius from his sovereign's trust. His plan was fulfilled, and Confucius went into exile with a sorrowful heart.[1] For thirteen years he journeyed from state to state in search of a ruler who would place confidence in him and grant him an opportunity to realize his wishes; for thirteen years he risked dangers, suffered insults, and exposed his age to that end; but for thirteen years, he journeyed in vain. Wide grew his fame; honored was he wherever he went; and ever faithful was the band of students that followed him. But for one reason or another not a ruler would listen wholly to his teaching; and his only desire in life was denied him. Yet, when at last he returned to his native land a weary old man and half broken-hearted, he would not give up his hope of transforming the world, but devoted his remaining years to literary labors, so that his principles might be left to benefit posterity, and so that, if they could not be carried out during his life, they might yet be put into actual practice after his death.[2]

These works then form a part of the basis of our discussion. They are: "The Book of Poetry," "The Book of History," "The Book of Changes," and "Spring and Autumn Annals." The first two are compilations, respectively, of the odes and records of the past, from which we have

[1] "Records of History," "Life of Confucius."
[2] "Life of Confucius."

gathered our material for the first chapter of this volume. The third is also not entirely an original work of his own; but in it he has set forth many of his metaphysical theories. The last is a genuine product of his pen. It is a summary account of the events in China between 722 and 481 B.C. But besides its historical interest, it has also another motive. It is an endeavor on the part of Confucius to praise the virtuous and criticize the wicked. It is a statement of his ethical code by way of realistic illustrations. Hence, of all his works Confucius considered this the most important. It is recorded that he had once said, "If I were to be appreciated, it would be due to the Annals; if I were to be condemned, it would be due to the Annals too."[1] Along with its many commentaries (commentaries by Cho Ch'iu-Ming, Kung Yang, and Ku-Liang), this book, therefore, offers us some very valuable material. In addition, however, there are several works, which, though not written by Confucius himself, are extremely important in a study of his political philosophy. First, there are the "Analects" and the "Book of Li," which are essentially records of his conversations. Then, we have the "Great Learning" and "The Doctrine of the Mean," which contain some of the most important teachings of Confucius as set forth by his disciples, among whom is included his grandson.

[1] Mencius, Book III, Part II, Chap. 7.

After having studied the life of Confucius and examined the original sources of his philosophy, we are prepared to discuss what it is. We may begin by quoting a passage from "The Doctrine of the Mean," in which lies all the essence of Confucian political theories. It reads:

> "Duke Ai asked about government.
>
> "The Master said, 'The government of King Wen and King Wu is engraved on the tablets of wood and bamboo. When there are men like them, the government will flourish. When there are not, it decays and ceases.
>
> "'With the right men the growth of government is rapid, even as vegetation is rapid in the earth. . . .
>
> "'Therefore, the administration of government depends upon getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler's own character. That character is to be cultivated by his treading the ways of virtue. And the treading those ways of virtue is to be cultivated by the cherishing of benevolence.
>
> "'Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives. Righteousness is the accordance of actions with what is right, and the great exercise of it is in honoring the worthy. The decreasing measures of the love due various grades of relatives, and the different ranks of honor due to the diverse degrees of worthiness. are produced by the principle of propriety.'"[1]

This passage is a fertile soil for the growth of many ideas. But among them, two are most important. First, there is the principle of government by men. However good the form which a government may take, however sound the laws it may establish, if there are not proper men to conduct it, it will still end in chaos. Secondly, we have the fundamental ideals of

[1] Chap. 20.

Confucianism — Benevolence and Righteousness. This instantly recalls to our minds the principles of Micius — Love and Justice. But though the ends of the two philosophies are thus identical, their means of accomplishing these ends are made totally different by the existence of a third and the most essential element in the Confucian theory — the doctrine of propriety. All these may be illustrated by another quotation from "The Book of Li":

"Confucius was in attendance on Duke Ai. "'May I inquire what is the greatest of all human functions?' asked the duke.

"Gravely answered Confucius, 'That Your Highness should make such an inquiry is of great fortune to the people. How dare your servant, then, not make a reply? Of all human functions, government is the greatest.'

"The duke said: 'May I ask then what it is to govern?'

"Answered Confucius: 'To govern is to rectify. If the sovereign practices righteousness, the people will all follow the government. What the sovereign does the people will also do. What the sovereign does not do, neither will the people do.'

"Said the duke: 'May I ask then how we should govern?'

"Confucius answered: 'Between husband and wife there should be deference. Between father and son there should be affection. Between sovereign and subject, there should be distinction. When these three things are in their proper condition, other things will follow them.'

"The duke said: 'Though I may not be qualified to practice such principles, I shall be glad to hear of the ways of establishing the three things. May I hear of them?'

"Answered Confucius: 'When the ancient rulers conducted their governments, they laid emphasis upon loving the people. When they practiced loving the people, they laid emphasis upon the principle of propriety. When

they formulated the principle of propriety, they laid emphasis upon the character of reverence.'" [1]

Thus it is seen that the first essentials of Confucianism are that the sovereign should practice righteousness himself in order to rectify the people, and that the principle of propriety should be enforced to make benevolence and justice possible in the state.

Let us discuss the Confucian doctrine of government by men in detail. As it is Confucius himself who edited "The Book of History," it is therefore not strange that he should indorse the theory of exemplary kingship such as we have outlined in our first chapter. As a matter of fact, he believes thoroughly in the efficacy of converting the people to good by personal example; and this he considers not only a duty, but necessary on the part of the sovereign of a state. Thus, we encounter constantly in the works and conversations of Confucius such statements as the following:

"Chih Kang-tze asked Confucius about government. Confucius replied: 'To govern is to rectify. If you lead the people with uprightness, who dares not be upright?'" [2]

"Chih Kang-tze asked Confucius again about government, saying, 'What do you say to killing the unprincipled for the good of the principled?'

"Confucius replied: 'Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors is like that

[1] Chap. 27.
[2] "Analects," Bk. XII, Chap. 17.

between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend when the wind blows across it.'"[1]

"The Master said, 'If a man makes his own conduct correct, what difficulty will he have in assisting in government? If he cannot rectify himself, what has he to do with rectifying others?'"[2]

The reasons why a ruler must rectify himself before he tries a hand at government are two. First, Confucius believes that it is only when the ruler is good and just that his commands are obeyed. Thus, in one place he says: "When a prince's personal conduct is correct, his government is effective without the issue of orders. If his personal conduct is not correct, he may issue orders, but they will not be followed."[3] In another place he also states:

"When a prince stays in his palace and makes an utterance, if it is good, it will be echoed even from beyond a thousand li, not to speak of his near environs. If it is not good, it will also be denounced from beyond a thousand li, not to speak of his near environs. No sooner do the words leave his lips than they are heard by the people. Though his conduct may be of good influence in his neighborhood, it is known of at a great distance. Words and conduct—these are the foundations for the character of a prince. What his character is based upon, there lies either his honor or his disgrace. Indeed, words and conduct—these are the very instruments which a prince may employ to move heaven and earth. Must he not be careful about them?"[4]

In plain language, Confucius thinks that public opinion is a great force in government. Unless the ruler has the backing of public opinion, he

[1] "Analects," Bk. XII, Chap. 19.
[2] "Analects," Bk. XIII, Chap. 13.
[3] "Analects," Bk. XIII, Chap. 6.
[4] "The Book of Changes," Epilogue, Pt. I.

will not be able to achieve much success. In order to secure such a backing, therefore, the ruler must cultivate his own person and be careful about his words and conduct.

The second reason for the same principle is found by Confucius in the fact that the inferiors are apt to imitate their superiors. Thus he avers:

> "The inferiors, in doing homage to their superior, do not follow his commands closely, but his conduct. If the superior likes a thing, the inferiors will even outdo him in liking it. Hence, the superior must be careful about his likes and dislikes. They are the models for the people." [1]

If he likes pleasure and indulgence, the people will follow his example and transform the state into another Lydia. If he is bent upon work and virtue, the people will be content with their toil and satisfied with doing good. Thus he points out:

> "If a superior loves propriety, the people will not dare not to be reverent. If he loves righteousness, the people will not dare not to submit to his example. If he loves good faith, the people will not dare not to be sincere." [2]

Again,

> "Never has there been a case of a sovereign loving benevolence and his people not loving righteousness. Never has there been a case where the people have loved righteousness, and the affairs of the sovereign have not been carried to completion." [3]

In short, as the ruler desires the people to be virtuous, so must he make of himself a virtuous example.

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 33.
[2] "Analects," Bk. XIII, Chap. 4.
[3] "The Great Learning," Chap. 10, Part 21.

Thus we come to the ideal scheme of Confucius for transforming the world through a single person. He must start with himself, then spread his influence gradually to his family and his state, until finally the whole empire comes under his moral sway. Says Confucius in "The Great Learning":

> "Things have their roots and their branches. Affairs have their ends and their beginnings. To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught in 'The Great Learning.'
>
> "The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their own persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. . . .
>
> "Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole empire was made tranquil and happy."[1]

In fine, Confucius believes that unless one is righteous himself, one cannot make others righteous; and that unless one is benevolent himself, one cannot make others benevolent. "On this account," says he, "the ruler must himself be possessed of the good qualities before he requires them in the people. He must not have the bad qualities in himself before he may require that they shall not be found in the people."[2] To push this principle to its logical conclusion, we

[1] "The Great Learning," Text of Confucius.
[2] "The Great Learning," Chap. 9.

have the following formula: Unless one can govern his person well, he is not qualified to govern his family; unless he can govern his family well, he is not qualified to govern the empire. Hence, the fundamental canon of Confucianism: Cultivate your own person first before you hope to accomplish anything. For the formula, we cannot find a better illustration than the following:

"What is meant by 'In order rightly to govern the state, it is necessary first to regulate the family,' is this: It is not possible for one to teach others, when he cannot teach his own family. Therefore, the ruler, without going beyond his family, completes his lessons for the state. There is filial piety; that is the very principle with which the sovereign should be served. There is fraternal submission; that is the very principle with which elders and superiors should be honored. There is kindness; that is the very principle by which the masses should be treated. . . .

"By the loving example of one family a whole state becomes loving, and from its courtesies the whole state becomes courteous; while through the ambition and perverseness of one man, the whole state may be led into confusion—such is the nature of influence. This verifies the saying, 'Affairs may be ruined by one single sentence; a kingdom may be settled by one man.'" [1]

The effect of such a process may also be illustrated by another passage:

"What is meant by 'The making of the whole empire peaceful and happy depends on the government of his state,' is this: When the sovereign behaves to his aged, as the aged should be behaved to, the people become filial; when the sovereign behaves to his elders, as the elders should be behaved to, the people learn brotherly

[1] "The Great Learning," Chap. 9.

submission; when the sovereign treats compassionately the young and helpless, the people do the same. Thus the ruler has a principle by which, as with a measuring square, he may regulate his conduct."[1]

But how will the ruler cultivate his own person? By what means can he make himself a living paragon of virtue for his people to admire and follow? Answers Confucius: "By practicing righteousness and benevolence." But then what is righteousness? How can it be cultivated? In answering these questions, Confucius develops the doctrine of "the Mean": Says he:

"The superior man embodies the course of the Mean; the lowly acts contrararily to it.

"That the superior man embodies the course of the Mean is because he is a superior man, so always maintains the Mean. That the lowly acts contrarily to it is because he is lowly and has no caution."[2]

Before we discuss the fundamental theories of the Mean in detail—when we come to the Principle of Propriety—it suffices here to say that Confucius believes that in every human relationship there is a fitting course of conduct, and that fitting course of conduct is designated by him as the Mean. To observe the Mean, therefore, is the key to the castle of righteousness. On no account whatever must the man who wishes to cultivate his own person deviate from the Mean. Hence, "The Great Learning" affirms:

"What is meant by 'The cultivation of the person depends on rectifying the mind,' is this: If the man be

[1] "The Great Learning," Chap. 10.
[2] "The Doctrine of the Mean," Chap. 2.

under the influence of passion, he will be incorrect in his conduct. He will be the same if he is under the influence of terror, or under the influence of fond regard, or under that of sorrow and distress.

"When the mind is not present, we look and do not see; we hear and do not understand; we eat and do not know the taste of what we eat.

"This is what is meant by saying that the cultivation of the person depends on the rectifying of the mind."[1]

Thus we see that the basic doctrine of righteousness, in Confucius' opinion, is found in the regulation of one's passions. One must always keep his mind unbiased and upright so that he may be able to distinguish clearly wherein the fitting course of conduct lies. When this theory is applied to family relationships, we have the following passage:

"What is meant by 'The regulation of one's family depends on the cultivation of his person,' is this: Men are partial where they feel affection and love; partial where they despise and dislike; partial where they stand in awe and reverence; partial where they feel sorrow and compassion; partial where arrogance and rudeness are shown them. Thus it is that there are few men in the world who love and at the same time know the bad qualities of the object of their love, or who hate and yet know the excellences of the object of their hatred.

"Hence it is said, in the common adage, 'A man does not know the wickedness of his son; nor does he know the richness of his growing corn.'

"This is what is meant by saying that if the person be not cultivated, a man cannot regulate his family."[2]

This theory must recall to the mind of our Western readers the famous saying of Socrates,

[1] "The Great Learning," Chap. 7.
[2] *Ibid*, Chap. 8.

"Know thyself." But it does not only stop at "knowing thyself"; it advances one step further and says, "Conquer thyself." In the opinion of Confucius, a man is always prone to find faults in others, and not in himself. So he makes it a principle for the guidance of the people that one must always look for faults within himself and endeavor to correct them. Thus we have the following statement:

> "What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not display in the treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in inferiors, let him not display in the service of his superiors; in what he hates in those who are before him, let him not therewith precede those who are behind him; in what he hates in those who are behind him, let him not therewith follow those who are before him; what he hates to receive on the right, let him not bestow on the left; what he hates to receive on the left, let him not bestow on the right. This is what is called 'the principle with which, as with a measuring square, one should regulate one's conduct.'"[1]

Such being the path of righteousness, the sovereign, in treading it, must, therefore, always observe a strict vigilance over his personal conduct. He must constantly try to look at things from the standpoint of the people rather than from his own, so that their welfare may be bettered by him, and so that his faults may be corrected to such an extent as to make him a real paragon of virtue. Thus continues "The Great Learning":

> "In 'The Book of Poetry,' it is said: 'How much to be rejoiced in are these princes, the parents of the people!'

[1] "The Great Learning," Chap. 10.

When a prince loves what the people love, and hates what the people hate, then is he what is called the parent of the people.

"In 'The Book of Poetry,' it is said: 'Lofty is that southern hill, with its rugged masses of rocks! Greatly distinguished are you, O grand-teacher Yin, the people all look up to you.' Rulers of states may not neglect to be careful. If they deviate from these principles they will be a disgrace to the empire."[1]

This brings us to the second element that is essential to the cultivation of the ruler's person — Benevolence. It is stated in "The Great Learning" that "as for the sovereign, he must rest in benevolence."[2] What is benevolence, then? Confucius appears to have a much broader definition for the word than that which is generally understood by it. He says in one place that "benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity."[3] Or, to translate the statement in a different way, "Benevolence is that which makes men men." In other words, Confucius thinks that it is on account of the existence in men of this capacity for benevolence that we have raised ourselves above the level of the lower animals. This ideal is not unlike that of Micius; and the similarity is further strengthened by an utterance of Confucius, which comes close to the Mician doctrine of mutual love and reciprocal helpfulness:

"Tse-Kung said, 'Imagine the case of a man extensively conferring benefits upon the people and able to assist all;

[1] "The Great Learning," Chap. 10.
[2] *Id.*, Chap. 3.
[3] "The Doctrine of the Mean," Chap. 20.

what would you say of him? Might he be called benevolent?'

"The master said, 'Why speak only of benevolence in connection with him? Must he not have the qualities of perfection! Even Yao and Shun were still solicitous about this.

"'Now, the benevolent man, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, seeks also to enlarge others.

"'To be able to do unto others what we wish to be done unto ourselves — this may be called the art of benevolence.'"[1]

Here, then, is the essence of the doctrine of service which Micius takes over at a later time as the principal part of his political philosophy. Here is also the core of Confucianism, and the very reason why it is so humanitarian. According to it, each one should endeavor to help his neighbor even as he helps himself. Each one should try to save the other from evil, even as he hopes himself to be saved. If one has attained wealth and yet has not enabled others to attain the same, he has not practiced the art of benevolence. If one has cultivated his own person and yet has not taught others to cultivate theirs, he may not be said to be benevolent. Thus, in Confucius' opinion, benevolence is the thing that makes society desirable, and that makes humanity cohesive. That is why he says, "Benevolence is that which makes men men"; and without which men would become either totally indifferent each towards other or mutually injurious like the

[1] "Analects," Bk. VI, Chap. 28.

lower animals. That is why he holds it as one of the fundamental canons of his teachings. That is also why he wants the rulers to practice it to set an example for the people to follow.

In these two doctrines, then, we have the ideals of Confucianism. In righteousness we have the principle by which an individual may regulate his personal conduct. In benevolence we have the principle by which he may adjust his dealings with others. If every person in a society can practice these principles and be at once rigid in adhering to his sense of righteousness wherever he himself is concerned, and yet helpful and forgiving according to the doctrine of benevolence wherever he comes into contact with others, then, in Confucius' opinion, a perfect state is attained.

To make such a state possible on the earth, therefore, is both his ambition and his problem. But so far he has only advanced one way in accomplishing it; and that is to transform the world by way of personal example. If a ruler wants his state to be well governed, he must first govern well himself. If a person desires to cultivate virtue in the whole world, he must first cultivate it in his own person. It is only when one has perfected what is near him that one is qualified to spread his influence afar. Beyond doubt, this theory has inestimable value. On the one hand, it imposes upon the individual a duty to be righteous. On the other, it also

thrusts upon him a responsibility to establish others as much as he seeks to establish himself. But this theory when standing by itself is also seen to have its shortcomings. This the sage seems to realize. Not to mention the possible contention that personal influence is, after all, elusive and uncertain, there are other practical difficulties that lie in the way of this theory. First, the rulers of states may not be persons who desire to practice this doctrine. Second, those who desire to practice this doctrine may not be rulers of states. For the first, history affords countless instances. For the second, there can be no sadder example than the sage himself, who sought for thirteen years a chance to realize his lifelong desire, and yet sought in vain. So in the former case, opportunities are wasted; in the latter, men; and in both the result is the same—the ideal state has failed to reach fulfillment for the blessing of humanity.

The impediment to the realization of this theory is exactly like that of many other idealistic theories which have exhorted men to be good and yet have not provided such means as will make men unable to be anything else but good. Micius has taught men to love one another. He has given the reasons why men should love one another. But his theories fail because they lack a contrivance for drawing men inevitably and irresistibly to his principle of mutual love. Plato

has penetrated into the devious ways of maintaining justice. He has conceived the various possibilities of bringing out the best in men who are to be heads of government. But his republic will always remain a dream because he has not concocted a plan which is simple and natural enough for men to be enabled to put his whole system into practice. The same trend of criticism may be applied to the Confucian theory as it stands thus far. It teaches men to be righteous and benevolent; but it has not provided such means as will make men unable to be anything *but* righteous and benevolent. It advises the ruler to rectify his people by rectifying himself; but it has not devised a scheme in which the people will be rectified even without the ruler rectifying himself. All these difficulties the great sage realizes. He knows that unless such means be found, his system cannot be said to be perfect; and unless humanity as a whole—both sovereign and subject—be made naturally and unavoidably righteous and benevolent, his ideal state will suffer the same fate—that of fading into insignificance and oblivion—as have many others. So to the creation of such means he now bends his energy and develops what makes Confucianism entirely distinct from all other philosophies of its like—the rules of propriety, or "Li."

What is this rule of propriety, then? It may be defined as an ethical code which attempts to

instil a sense of righteousness and benevolence in every individual in a state or society. It is, therefore, essentially different from law. While the latter deals only with the deeds or the appearances of things, the former goes back to the motive and will that actuate them. While the latter wields force and punishment as its weapon of control, the former uses moral sanction and social disapproval. While the latter commands and forbids, the former aims to teach and convert. While the object of the latter is attained when there is no apparent act of disobedience within its jurisdiction, that of the latter cannot be attained unless every person makes it a part of his second nature to be righteous and benevolent. Thus we find that the rule of propriety is by far more positive than law, and Confucius casts, not unreasonably, a glance of disapprobation upon the latter. Says he:

> "If the rule is not practiced and if the teaching is not fulfilled, rank and emolument are not sufficient to encourage good, and punishment and amercement are not sufficient to shame evil." [1]

Why are they not sufficient? Because they do not reach the root of the matter. Because they do not correct the minds of the people. They may be able to reward the good and punish the evil in particular cases; but they cannot

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 33.

encourage good and shame evil in times to come. Thus Confucius explains in another place:

> "In hearing litigations, I am like any other person. What is necessary, however, is to cause the people to have no litigations."[1]

In other words, law can adjudicate disputes, but it is only the rule of propriety that can do away with them. Moreover, Confucius thinks that it is a crime on the part of rulers to use only law and not apply the rule of propriety. If the rulers have not given the people a sense of righteousness and benevolence and yet endeavor to punish by law whoever is not righteous and benevolent, have not the rulers themselves committed a greater wrong than those whom they have punished? Thus Confucius declares: "To put the people to death without having instructed them—that is called cruelty. To require from them suddenly the full tale of work without having given them warning—that is called oppression."[2] In short, Confucius believes that in the perfection of the rule of the principle of propriety, law may even be set aside. Not that Confucius believes that law is entirely useless, but he thinks that when everyone in a state acts in accordance with righteousness and benevolence, there is hardly any occasion for the application of law. So, in Confucius' scheme, law is not the principal

[1] "Analects," Bk. XII, Chap. 13.
[2] *Id.*, Bk. XX, Chap. 2.

thing that regulates the people's conduct. Instead, it is relegated to a secondary place; it is only used reluctantly at times as a check and a help toward a better and more significant means of rectifying the people's minds. And that means the rule of propriety. Hence,

> "The master said, 'If good men were to govern a country in succession for a hundred years, they would be able to transform the violently bad and dispense with capital punishment. True, indeed, is this saying!'"[1]

Now, we come to the rule of propriety itself. What are its fundamental doctrines, what its origin and its nature? And how does it work to instil a sense of righteousness and benevolence in the individual? To answer the second question first, we can do no better than quote a passage from "The Book of Changes":

> "In a house of accumulated virtue, there is bound to be good fortune. In a house of accumulated evil, there is bound to be disaster. That a subject kills his sovereign, or that a son kills his father—this is not due to any accident which happens in a single morning or a single evening, but is due to a long gradual development and the failure to distinguish the growing evil in its early stages. It is said in 'The Book of Changes,' 'When we tread upon frost, thick ice will come ere long.' That is to say that the development is natural."[2]

Here, then, is the theory of propriety in a nutshell: all great things, good and bad, originate in smaller things. In Confucius' own words, they are derived by gradual development. Now, the

[1] "Analects," Bk. XIII, Chap. 11.
[2] "The Second Phenomenon."

sequels of this conception are twofold. On the one hand, since we know that it is only because evil is not nipped in the bud that it grows into enormities, naturally it becomes a necessity for us to stop evil, not after its consummation, but at its very beginning. Hence, Confucius says, "In the scheme of the great learning, to prohibit where the evil has not yet appeared—that is called forestallment. To act when it is proper and possible—that is called opportuneness."[1] On the other hand, as we know also that virtue cannot grow among men without constant cultivation, so, if we desire the people to be virtuous at all, we must devise a means to make this constant cultivation possible. In short, according to Confucius, whether a state is well-governed or ill-governed depends entirely upon whether it has started its people on a virtuous or evil road. If it has succeeded in making its environment entirely congenial to the development of righteousness and benevolence, if it keeps on impressing upon the people these ideals in their daily lives, if it is able to weave such virtues into the whole tissue of their lives, then the ideal state is within its reach. Thus says Confucius:

"The way of Heaven and Earth is to be constant and nothing more. . . . The Sun and the Moon are possessed of this nature and so are able to shine constantly. The four seasons constantly pursue their course, and thus are able to accomplish many things. If the sage keeps

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 18.

constantly to his principles, the civilization of the world will be completed.

"When you view all things in the world from what they are constant in, you know the nature of them all." [1]

Thus, the theory of propriety is narrowed down to two doctrines. First, it must teach the people from the very beginning the distinction between good and evil. Second, it must devise a means to keep the people on the track of the good and away from the paths of evil. Thus it is said in "The Book of Li":

"Propriety is that which distinguishes what is near and what is remote, what is the fitting course of conduct in a doubtful predicament, what is similar and what is different, what is right and what is wrong." [2]

And again:

"The Master said, 'The principle of a prince remembles a wall. It aims to prevent the people from indulging in that side of their natures which is not sufficiently good. . . . Hence, the prince establishes the rule of propriety in order to prevent evil; promulgates punishment in order to prevent excess. . . .'" [3]

But how will this rule of propriety—or ethical code—proceed to distinguish between right and wrong, and inculcate a sense of righteousness and benevolence in the people? In the first place, Confucius aims to use it to impress upon the people a proper understanding of their respective social positions along with their various relationships and duties. According to Confucius, all confusion and strife among men are chiefly due

[1] "The Book of Changes," "The Phenomenon of Constancy."
[2] *Id.*, Chap. 1.
[3] "The Book of Li," Chap. 30.

to their insatiable and illegitimate desires. Because they do not observe what their social duties demand and because they seek what is not within their right to seek, therefore peace and harmony has been denied to the world. Thus, he says:

> "In eating, drinking, and relationship between the sexes, there are the great desires of men. In death, poverty, and toil, there are the great dislikes of men. Men's hearts are hidden inside; they may not be measured. Their desires and dislikes are stored in their hearts, and their colors may not be seen."[1]

This sounds like Taoism. But Confucius' deduction from this observation differs greatly from that of Laotze. Instead of preaching a total extermination of desire, Confucius advocates a system of regulation. In his opinion, if everybody can only be made to realize the responsibilities of his position, learn to know what society demands from him and confine his desires within his legitimate sphere accordingly, righteousness will be maintained throughout the state. But this is only beginning the question. How is it possible for the people to realize and learn these things? It is possible, answers Confucius, by carefully defining at the very beginning the various requirements of the diverse social positions and relationships. This is what he calls rectification of names, and it is well illustrated by a passage in the "Analects":

> "Tse-Lu said, 'The ruler of Wei has been waiting for you, in order, with you, to administer the government. What will you consider the first thing to be done?'

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 9.

"The Master said, 'What is necessary is to rectify names.'

"'So, indeed!' said Tse-Lu, 'You are wide of the mark! Why must there be such rectification?'

"The Master said, 'How uncultivatad you are, Lu! A superior man, in regard to what he does not know, shows a cautious reserve. If names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success. When affairs cannot be carried on to success, proprieties and music will not flourish. When proprieties and music do not flourish, punishments will not be properly awarded. When punishments are not properly awarded, the people do not know how to move hand or foot.'"[1]

In plainer language, if the names are not rectified, the duties of social positions pertaining to them will be confused. When such duties are confused, then the government knows not of what to approve and disapprove, and the people know not what to follow and what to avoid. Under such circumstances, most likely everyone will follow his own selfish inclinations; and dire chaos will be the result. Hence, says "The Book of Li": "Names—these are the essentials of government. Must we not be careful about them?"[2]

To illustrate this further, we may recite another passage from the "Analects:"

"Duke Ch'ing of Ch'i asked Confucius about government.

"Confucius replied, 'Let the prince be prince; the minister, minister; the father, father; and the son, son.'

"'Good!' said the Duke, 'If, indeed, the prince be not prince, the minister not minister, the father not father,

[1] "The Book of Li," Bk. XIII, Chap. 3.
[2] *Id.*, Chap. 16.

and the son not son; though I have my revenue, can I enjoy it?'"[1]

So it is clear that what Confucius desires is to make everyone in society fully qualified for his own part and yet not tending to encroach upon that of others. It is interesting here, therefore, to examine his classification of the various human relationships as well as his description of their respective duties. According to him, the relationships are five in number, namely, sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, friend and friend. As for their respective duties, they are discussed in several places. In "The Great Learning," where Confucius explains that what he teaches is to rest in the highest excellence, we find:

"As a sovereign, one rests in benevolence. As a subject, one rests in reverence. As a son, one rests in filial piety. As a father, one rests in kindness. In friendly dealings with people, one rests in sincerity."[2]

But a more practical method is found by Confucius for teaching the people to realize what their respective duties are. In "The Doctrine of the Mean," he says:

"To serve one's father as one would require his son to serve himself . . . To serve one's sovereign as one would require his inferiors to serve himself . . . To serve one's elder brother as one would require his younger brother to serve himself . . . To serve one's friend as one would require him to serve himself . . ."[3]

[1] Bk. XII, Chap. 11.
[2] Chap. 3.
[3] Chap. 13.

This may, in fact, be called the Confucian golden rule for defining one's various duties. Holding the rule constantly before oneself, one cannot fail to find what the requirements of one's position are. When one is clear about one's duties and requirements, the groundwork is laid for one's observance of them. When everyone is benefited by such an understanding, the foundation is laid for the attainment of the ideal state. Thus says Confucius:

> "When the common people are poor, they are shameless. When they are rich, they are arrogant. When they are shameless, they steal. When they are arrogant, they are rebellious. The rule of propriety is, therefore, established in accordance with human nature to fend it from evil. Thus the sage, in conducting government, makes the rich not arrogant, the poor not shameless, and the noble not resentful against their sovereign. Hence, there is little chance of confusion."[1]

To make such a condition possible and regulate, or rectify, the illegitimate desires of men, therefore, is the first aim of the ethical code of Confucius. Thus says "The Book of Li":

> "That the sage can manage the whole world as a family and the entire empire as a person is not at all due to any guesswork, but to his understanding of human nature and human righteousness, and of what benefits the people and what harms them. What is human nature? The seven sensations of pleasure, anger, grief, fear, love, hatred, and desire — all these we express without being taught them. What is human righteousness? That the father should be tender, the son should be filial, the elder brother should be kindly, the younger brother should be submissive, the husband should be loving, the wife should be obedient, the

[1] The Book of Li," Chap. 30.

aged should be gracious, the young should be reverent, the sovereign should be benevolent, and the subject should be loyal — these ten things are called human righteousness. To cultivate mutual trustfulness and harmony — that is what benefits the people. To kill and strive with each other — that is what harms the people. There is nothing that can be used by the sage to regulate the seven passions of men, to promote the ten kinds of human righteousness, to cultivate what benefits the people, to exalt the spirit of self-sacrifice and complaisance and so to abolish strife — there is nothing but the rule of propriety." [1]

So much for inculcating the sense of righteousness in the people. Now we come to the cultivation of benevolence. First, as a principle means to this end, Confucius wishes to mold his ethical code in such a way as to imbue the people with an aptitude for "complaisance," or self-sacrifice. The original word for "complaisance" in Chinese is one too full of significance to have an equivalent in the English language.[2] It can be used to mean courtesy. When one steps aside from an entrance and says amiably, "After you," that is embodied in the meaning of the Chinese word, "complaisance." But often it is used, too, to signify things of by far greater import. For instance, the giving by Emperor Yao of his throne to the meritorious Shun instead of to his own undeserving son would also be considered an act of complaisance. So, in short, it may be defined as that spirit which tends to make men consider others' welfare before their own, or, in other words, the spirit of self-sacrifice. Thus says "The

1 "The Book of Li," Chap. 9.
2 "See "Analects," Bk. IV. Chap. 13.

Book of Li": "The rule of propriety is to lower oneself and elevate others."[1] In Confucius' opinion, if only everyone can be made to humble himself and elevate others, then the world will be free from the pollution of strife, and benevolence and righteousness will rule instead.

In the second place, Confucius believes that benevolence can be further promoted by teaching the people to be filial to their parents, to be attached to their relatives, and then, gradually, to spread their affections abroad. Here, then, is the fundamental difference between Confucius' conception of benevolence and Micius' principle of universal love. The former does not believe in the teaching of universal love at the very outset. He considers it rather as an ideal than as a fundamental. He thinks that as a fundamental it is impracticable. So he substitutes for it his doctrine of gradual extension. His arguments may be summarized as follows: If we want a child to have a large vocabulary, we must first begin by teaching him the alphabet. If he knows the alphabet, he may learn to know words. Otherwise, if he does not know even the alphabet, and yet we expect of him a complete understanding of all the words in the dictionary, are we not demanding the impossible? So it is in this case. It is more natural for men to love their kindred than to love humanity in general. Now, if we

[1] Chap. 1.

want them to love humanity in general, must we not begin also at the very beginning and teach them to love their kindred? If men learn to love their kindred as they should be loved, then there is an opportunity for them to extend their love even beyond them. Otherwise, if they do not love even their kindred, how can we expect them to love at all those who are not connected with them in any way? This argument may be further illustrated by the utterance of one of Confucius' disciples:

> "The Philosopher Yü said, 'They are few who, being filial and fraternal, are ready to offend their superiors. There have been none who, not liking to offend their superiors, have been fond of stirring up confusion.
>
> '"The superior man directs his attention to what is fundamental. That being established, all righteous courses naturally ensue. Filial piety and fraternal submission — are they not the roots of benevolence?'"[1]

The principle, in short, is thus summarized by Mencius: "I treat my own elders as they should be treated; so I treat others' elders also as they should be treated. I treat my own young ones as they should be treated; so I treat others' young ones also as they should be treated."[2]

But all these are only principles showing how the inculcation of righteousness and benevolence in the people should be carried out. They do not, however, devise a means for making the inculcation possible. As we have stated above

[1] Analects, 1, 2.
[2] Mencius, Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 7.

that the second doctrine of "the rule of propriety" is to provide such a means, let us then examine into what it is. At this juncture, we must first recall what Confucius has said about the gradual development of good or evil. According to him, if we desire to arrest evil, we must nip it in the bud; if we desire to establish good, we must promote it even in the very minutest of things. Now, let us apply this principle to our present problem. If we want to impress the people with a proper understanding of their respective duties, if we want to cultivate a spirit of "complaisance" in them, and if we want to teach them to love their kindred so as to learn how to be benevolent, what are the best means whereby we may attain this end? Just these: By giving the people constant association with these ideals, by making them practice these principles daily, both consciously and unconsciously, and by making this ethical code a part of their second nature, as it were. But then this is only begging the question. What are these means which can achieve such wondrous results? Confucius answers, "Ceremonies."

It is because of their inability to grasp this principle that many Western authors are led to make blunders which are almost unforgivable in the eyes of the Chinese. Without penetrating deeply into the basis of things, they are apt to draw hasty conclusions from mere appearances. They ridicule Chinese ceremoniousness, and they

reduce the ethical standards of that ancient people to a wearisome book of etiquette. This should not be so. For behind the Chinese ceremonies and courtesies there is an ideal as pure and as divine as religion, and as lofty and as noble as any thought ever formulated on this earth. They are established to lead the people into proper living. They are made to weave righteousness and benevolence into the fabric of the lives of men. On the one hand, they seek to stamp upon men in their daily routine a proper understanding of their respective social positions along with their various relationships and duties; hence, they promote virtue from the very outset. On the other hand, they tend to create a forceful ethical code from which no one dares to deviate for fear of social disapproval; hence, they nip evil in the bud. That in walking, for instance, a younger person should allow his elders to precede him is not a mere form of courtesy, but to teach people the fitting course of conduct in all human intercourse. That in practicing archery one should bow to his fellow sportsmen first is not a simple matter of courtesy, but to train men to be "complaisant." Space does not permit us to expound such things in detail. But suffice it to say, that behind every courtesy and in every ceremony we find a principle and a teaching. They are not meaningless superfluities; but they seek to convey through commonplace media a noble message to men. In short, they are the

embodiment of the rule of propriety. Hence, says "The Book of Li":

> "In the ceremony of sacrificing to God in the wilderness, there is an instance of perfect reverence. In the ceremony of worshiping ancestors in the temples, there is an instance of perfect benevolence. In the ceremony of mourning, there is an instance of perfect loyalty. . . In the ceremony of making gifts, there is an instance of perfect propriety. Hence, if one would like to know the principles of benevolence and righteousness, one should observe the ceremonies."[1]

Again:

> "The rule of propriety must originate in human nature, must be practiced on the earth, distributed among affairs, altered in accordance with various branches of knowledge. When it is carried out by the people, we have righteousness. When it is put into practice, we have the diverse ceremonies of making gifts, of complaisance, of drinking and eating, of the coming of age and marriage, of mourning and worship, of archery, and of embassy among states."[2]

To illustrate this point further, let us take ancestral worship, for instance. This has often been regarded by Westerners as a curious, if not barbaric, relic of primitive peoples. But it is not what they think it. It is an institution set up for a definite purpose; and that purpose is the cultivation of benevolence in men. How does this come about? We have already shown that Confucius believed that the best way of teaching men to be benevolent is to teach them to love their kindred. Now, what scheme can help this teaching better than to make the people not only

[1] Chap. 10.
[2] Chap. 9.

attached to their kindred while alive, but also after they are dead? The institution of ancestral worship. The links of this chain of thought are clearly revealed in the following passage, which shows how a prince may be brought to love his people by loving his kindred:

"It is human nature to love one's parents. As a man loves his parents, therefore he reveres his grandparents. As he reveres his grandparents so be worship his ancestors. As he worships his ancestors, so he gathers together his kindred. As he gathers together his kindred, so his ancestral temples are full of grandeur. As his ancestral temples are full of grandeur, so is he attached to the land. As he is attached to the land, so he loves the people."[1]

Speaking of worship alone, it is also interesting, perhaps, to note how much of teaching is centered in it. Says "The Book of Li":

"Worship is not a matter that comes from outside; it is generated from within the heart. The heart is struck with awe, and so expresses it by ceremony. Hence, only those who are virtuous can fully understand the significance of worship.

"When the virtuous worship, they seldom fail to get blessings. The blessings are not what is understood by the common people. They are a sense of the fitness of all things. One receives blessing when one is possessed of this sense of fitness. That is to say, he feels that he has fulfilled all his duties and acted in accordance with the principles of proper living. That a subject serves his sovereign with loyalty, and that a son serves his parents with filial piety — all originate in this. When one is in accordance with the spirits above, with his sovereign and elders externally, and is filial towards his parents internally, then he may be said to have a sense of the fitness of all things. Only the virtuous can have such a sense. Only when one has such a sense, can one worship.

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 16.

"Great, indeed, is the matter of worship! It gives the sense of the fitness of things. It is the very foundation of teaching. When a superior man teaches, he teaches people externally to reverence their sovereign and elders and internally to serve their parents with filial piety. Hence, when an intelligent king occupies the high place his numerous subjects are obedient. Because he worships his ancestors and is attached to the land, all the sons and grandsons are filial and obedient. He fulfils his duties and clings to righteousness; and civilization flourishes.

"Hence, in serving his sovereign, a superior man will practice the same principle. What he dislikes in his superiors, he will not display in the treatment of his inferiors. What he dislikes in his inferiors, he will not display in the service of his superiors. To practice oneself what one condemns in others — this is not the way of teaching. Hence, all the teachings of the superior man are founded in the roots of things. This is in perfect accordance with nature. Like that, is worship. Thus it is said, 'Worship is the foundation of teaching.'" [1]

From this, it cannot but be clear that worship as a ceremony has for its sole purpose the inculcation in the people of a proper understanding of their social positions, along with their various relationships and respective duties.

But we would do Confucius a great injustice were we to think that he was entirely engrossed in the importance of ceremonies. On the contrary, unlike the degraded Confucianists of later times, he never lost sight of the fact that they were but a convenient means to achieve a desirable end. What he wanted was to use these ceremonies to create a standardized ethical code or moral atmosphere in his state, based upon the

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 25.

fundamental doctrines of propriety such as we have analyzed before. He desired to have his people practice the ceremonies in their daily routine and throughout their lives, to learn to appreciate their basic ideals gradually, to be tinged with their influence when young, and to practice them either consciously or unconsciously when grown up. In short, he wanted to make benevolence and righteousness a part of their natures. Just so this could be accomplished, just so such an ethical spirit could be made to prevail among the people, he was not particular about what kind of ceremonies they were led to practice. As a matter of fact, he even believed that an appropriate change of ceremonies at times was better than a slavish observance of them. This may be seen in the following statement:

"In the observance of ceremonies, to know the demands of circumstances is the best. To understand the fundamental principles of the ceremonies is next. After that is to know their various gradations. Then comes the ability to apply them to fit the occasion. And, finally, to follow them formally. Yao and Shun gave their thrones to their meritorious ministers instead of to their own sons, and King Tang and King Wu deposed their respective sovereigns and placed themselves in their stead — such are the instances of those who know the demands of circumstances. To know the various reasons assigned to the worship of Heaven, Earth, and one's ancestors, and the proper course of conduct between father and son, and between sovereign and subject — this is to understand the fundamental principles of ceremonies. To know the differences among the diverse worship of the spirits of the state, of rivers and mountains, and others — this is to understand the various gradations of ceremonies. To know when the ceremony of mourning should be used and when the ceremony of

welcoming guests — this is to be able to apply the ceremonies to fitting occasions. To sacrifice a lamb or a pig, to order the hundreds of officers to be on foot in a procession, to kill a bull and offer it entirely in worship — this is to follow ceremonies formally."[1]

When it comes to the last, in Confucius' opinion, the state of affairs will be as deplorable as when there is no such thing as the rule of propriety at all. Thus says he:

"If a prince is able to govern his kingdom according to the rule of propriety and the spirit of complaisance, what difficulty will he have? If he cannot govern it according to the rule of propriety and the spirit of complaisance, what has he to do with ceremonies?"[2]

Hence, it is only the establishment of that ethical atmosphere that is important, not the ceremonies. Declares "The Book of Li":

"The reason why ceremonies are respected is because of their significance. To know their significance and to observe them reverently — this is how an emperor should govern the empire."[3]

In addition to ceremonies, however, Confucius has also provided other means to accomplish the ideal end. They are music, law, and punishment. Thus the sage says:

"Ceremonies are established to guide the people's desires. Music is established to harmonize their natures. Law is established to standardize their conduct. Punishment is established to curb their excesses. Ceremonies, music, law, and punishment — all these have the same end in view, to civilize the people and lead to good government."[4]

1 "The Book of Li," Chap. 10.
2 "Analects," Bk. IV, Chap. 13.
3 Chap. 11.
4 "The Book of Li," Chap. 19.

There is little to say about law and punishment. They only follow, and do not lead. Their purpose is negative, and not positive. In the Confucian political philosophy, they are given little deliberation and emphasis. But music is different. It is often discussed in connection with ceremonies; and it is regarded as one of the two principal means wherewith to instil righteousness and benevolence in men. Why is music so important? It is because it touches the soul of the people who hear it; and it is the finest expression of human sentiment. Says Confucius:

> "Music is born in the hearts of men. When sentiments are stirred up, they find expression in sounds. When the sounds are harmonized, they form music. Hence, in times of peace and order, the music is joyous and contented; it shows that the government is harmonious. In times of confusion, the music is resentful and indignant; it indicates that the government is corrupt. In a vanquished state, the music is mournful and reflective; it shows that the people are oppressed. Thus is the way of music and sounds connected with government." [1]

Not only, however, does music express the sentiments of the people; it is also able to arouse them. So we read:

> "Men are of a nature that is common with beings of flesh and blood, and of sentiments and sensations. They are not constant in their feelings of grief or joy, pleasure or anger. They are moved by external things; and their feelings are expressed accordingly. Hence, when the music that gives the sensation of oppressive mournfulness is played, men will feel sad. When the music that gives

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 19.

the sensation of fearless resolve and dauntless courage is played, men will feel bold and determined. When the music that gives the sensation of calm grandeur and straightforward earnestness is played, men will feel composed and reverent. When the music that gives the sensation of generous congeniality and sweet evenness is played, men will feel kindly and loving. When the music that gives the sensation of intriguing seductiveness and loose debauchery is played, men will be inclined to excesses and confusion."[1]

Since such is the magnitude of the influence of music, how should we handle it but with the greatest care? So mused Confucius, "It was with caution that the former sage-emperors dealt with the things that moved men." Based upon this principle, he then proposed that, in governing a state, music be so composed and directed by the ruler as to check the evil tendencies and foster the virtuous roots that may be found in the hearts of men.[2] Nor did he stop with merely formulating the proposition. There is evidence to show that he once edited a book of music, which must have contained his theories of the nature and uses of music, but which has unfortunately been lost through the grinding of the mill of time.[3] But despite that irretrievable loss, the fundamental principle is still clear to us. He wanted to employ ceremonies and music to develop in his state an ethical atmosphere that would be in perfect accord with his principles of

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 19.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] See "Analects," Bk. IX, Chap. 14.

righteousness and benevolence. He says in "The Book of Li":

"When men are born, they are calm; that is their nature. When they are affected by external things, they grow agitated; that is because of their desires. As the external things come into contact with their senses, men begin to form likes and dislikes. As their likes and dislikes are not put under control inside, as their senses seduce them from outside, and as they cannot return to themselves, the reason of their natures is destroyed.

"Now, as the external things can affect men in endless ways and as men do not put their likes and dislikes under control, so when external things come, men are completely dominated by them. When men are completely dominated by external things, they destroy their natural reason and pursue restlessly their earthly desires. Hence, there are violent, unfilial, and disloyal minds. Hence, there are excessive, indulgent, and rebellious affairs. Hence, the strong intimidate the weak, the numerous oppress the few, the clever deceive the stupid, the bold harass the timorous. Hence, the disabled and the defective are not comforted, and the old and young, and the helpless and the destitute are not given a chance of settlement. This is the way to great confusion.

"Therefore, the sages establish ceremonies and music in order to put men's desires under control. There are the various grades of mourning to put men's grief under control. There are also different instruments of music to put men's happiness under control. Marriage and regulations of costume — these are made to distinguish the sexes. Ceremonies of archery and feasting — these are made to rectify ways of association. The end of ceremonies is to regulate people's hearts; the end of music is to harmonize people's expressions. Law is established to put these into practice. Punishment is established to fend them from encroachment. When these four things — ceremonies, music, law, and punishment — are extended to the four quarters of the empire and not impeded, then the principle of perfect government is complete."[1]

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 19.

Thus we come to an end of Confucius' theory of propriety. It has for its purpose the regulation of the people's hearts and the cultivation of righteousness and benevolence in their minds. It chooses for its means an ethical code, taught to the people through ceremonies and music, supported by law and punishment, and made the dominant moral force in the state, or society. Thus the observance of its principles, under the Confucian scheme, becomes indispensable both to the individual and to the sovereign, or to the government at large. Take the individual, for instance; unless he observes the rules of propriety he will not be able to understand properly his social position along with its various relationships and duties. Devoid of such understanding, he is bound to find many a thorn besetting his path. So it is said":

> "The rule of propriety is the trunk of man. Without a trunk, he will not be able to stand." [1]

And also we read from "The Book of Li":

> "That man is man is because of the rule of propriety." [2]

But if an individual must needs observe the rule of propriety, the sovereign has even more reason to do so. For it is only in its faithful and diligent observance that the sovereign can find

[1] Commentaries of Cho Ch'iu-ming on "Spring and Autumn Annals," the 7th year of Duke Chao.
[2] Chap. 47.

safety for his enviable position and peace and order for his state.

> "The rule of propriety is the sovereign's great instrument. It is that instrument whereby small evils can be distinguished . . . affairs can be systematized, benevolence and righteousness can be brought to the fore, and the efficiency of government and the safety of the sovereign's position can be secured. Hence, if the government is not in accordance with the rule of propriety, the position of the sovereign will be jeopardized." [1]

The truth is this: If the rule of propriety is not observed, the desires of the people will not be regulated. Everybody in the state will cherish an illegitimate ambition for the throne, and the sovereign will find it difficult to defend his place. Now, coming to government, we find also the rule of propriety indispensable to it.

> "If the people are led by laws and it is sought to give them uniformity by punishment, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame.
>
> "If they are led by virtue and it is sought to give them uniformity by the rule of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good." [2]

The gist of this passage is also clear. In a state where the rule of propriety is practiced by all, a little violation of it on the part of an individual will immediately elicit an unpleasant conspicuousness, which in turn will produce on himself a sense of shame and urge him to seek uniformity with others. In this way, therefore, the state can nip evil in the bud and dispense with law and

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 9.
[2] "Analects," Bk. II, Chap. 3.

punishment. Thus, according to Confucius, the rule of propriety is as essential to the government as it is to the individual and to the sovereign. In short, it is indispensable to the state, or society at large.

"The rule of propriety is to the rectification of a state as a scale is to the weighing of things, as a rope is to the measurement of a line, and as a compass or a plane is to the making of a circle or a square.

"With a scale, one cannot be deceived as to the weight of things. With a rope, one cannot be deceived as to the straightness or crookedness of a line. With a compass and a plane, one cannot be deceived in the making of a circle, or a square. With careful observance of the rule of propriety, a superior man cannot be deceived in cases of evil and falsehood.

"Hence, those are called the principled people, who exalt the rule of propriety and act according to it; and those are called the unprincipled, who do not exalt the rule of propriety and do not act according to it.

"The rule of propriety is the way to dutifulness and complaisance. Hence, when it is practiced in worship, the people will be reverent. When it is practiced in the government, both the noble and the lowly will keep to their respective positions. When it is practiced in the family, father and son will love each other, and brothers will live harmoniously. When it is practiced in the neighborhood, the old and the young will observe their respective duties.

"That is why Confucius said: 'In governing the people, nothing is better than the rule of propriety.'" [1]

Notwithstanding this, Confucius has always kept in his mind the fact that the rule of propriety is, after all, but a means, and not an ideal. He advocates it because it is the most expedient instrument, in his opinion, for the inculcation of

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 26.

benevolence and righteousness in men. But he looks beyond to the time when there will be no need of any rule of propriety and when righteousness and propriety become part of men's natures. Thus he divides his ideal state into two stages. The first stage is an experimental stage. It is called by him the period of "small cheer."[1] In this period, men still retain their selfish desires. They have only kindness for their own children, and love for their own parents. They work and trade for themselves. In such a period, therefore, the rule of propriety is essential "in order to rectify the relationship between sovereign and subject, to strengthen the attachment between father and son, to foster harmony among brothers, to promote love between husband and wife, to systematize affairs, to regulate different regions, to exalt the virtuous and the able . . ."[2] Thus it is made possible to prevent evil from the very beginning and to keep the people on the right track. But beyond this stage, wherein the people are imbued with righteousness and benevolence, there is another and better one. This is explained by Confucius in the following passage:

> "When the great principle prevails, the whole world is bent upon the common good. The virtuous and able are honored, sincerity is praised, and harmony is cultivated. Hence, the people not only treat their own parents and children as they should be treated, but others' as well. They provide that all the old are given comfort, all the

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 9.
[2] *Ibid.*

adults are given work, all the young are given development, all the widowed, orphaned, helpless, disabled and defective people are given nourishment. For every male there is a division of land; for every female there is a home. The people dislike to have wealth wasted; but they do not like to hoard it up for themselves. They dislike to have their strength unemployed; but they do not like to work solely for themselves. Hence, all cunning designs become useless, and theft and banditry do not exist. . . This is called 'the age of Great Universality.'" [1]

Such, then, is the alpha and omega of the Confucian theory of propriety, or of benevolence and righteousness. Ever since it was first enunciated, it has gone through various grinding mills of criticism. There are the Taoists, who think that benevolence and righteousness only disturb the people's minds and do not lead them toward simplicity. There are the Legalists who insist that such principles are not sufficient to produce efficiency. Then steps in Micius and lays down his objection to the use of ceremonies and music. And along come the Chinese modernists, who, tinged with Western influences, charge the time-honored philosophy with being criminal negligent of the material welfare of the people and villainous complicity in the long continued domination of absolutism in their country. All these criticisms, however, are unjust so far as Confucius himself is concerned. Lacking the wide understanding of their teacher, his followers may have degenerated in later times. Exploited by cunning monarchs, his philosophy may have been distorted to suit

[1] "The Book of Li," Chap. 9.

their selfish purposes. But taking Confucianism as it is and judging it by its intrinsic value, we cannot but reach this one conclusion: It is guiltless of all those charges.

To discuss the criticisms in detail: The Taoists' criticism is one peculiar to their own philosophy. It marks the fundamental difference between the two teachings. While the Taoists regard ignorant simplicity as a state of bliss, Confucius believes that the ideal conditions can be attained by men only through voluntary observance of benevolence and righteousness. While the Taoists deem the extermination of self possible, Confucius thinks differently and preaches only regulation of desires. So, if the two philosophies may be compared at all, they may not be compared to the disadvantage of Confucius. Turning to the legalists' criticisms, we find the same argument true. It is not Confucius' aim to secure efficiency. His whole purpose is to teach men to live in harmony and mutual helpfulness. Assuredly, Confucius believes that under certain circumstances fighting is not only necessary, but advisable;[1] but he has a better ideal, and would like ever so much to entirely dispense with fighting. Moreover, if his rule of propriety is carried out, efficiency in government will also be secured. For what government, let us ask, can be more efficient than the one under which evil is nipped

[1] See "Analects," Bk. XIII, Chaps. 29, 30; "The Book of Changes," "The Phenomenon of Revolution."

in the very bud by public opinion and dutifulness is embodied in every person as a part of his nature? Coming to Micius' objections, we discover that they too do not hold. So far as Confucius is concerned, we have already seen that he himself disapproves of the slavish observance of ceremonies; so Micius' criticism of the over-ceremoniousness of Confucian philosophy need not be heeded here. As for his objection to the use of music, it only indicates the eccentricity of his doctrine of economy when carried to the extreme, and does not prove at all the faultiness of the logic of his great contemporary. Criticisms by Chinese modernists have been the vogue of late. But they appear to spring from an effervescent sentiment toward the present doctrines rather than from a comprehensive study of the time-honored philosophy itself. Take, for instance, the charge that Confucius neglects the material welfare of the people. This may easily be refuted by a passage from the "Analects":

> "When the Master went to Wei, An Yü acted as driver of his carriage.
>
> "The Master observed, 'How numerous are the people!'
>
> "Yü said, 'Since they are numerous, what more shall be done for them?' 'Enrich them,' was the reply.
>
> "'And when they have been enriched, what more shall be done?' The Master said, 'Teach them.'"[1]

From this, it may even be said that Confucius considers the material welfare of the people before he considers their spiritual welfare. At any rate,

[1] Bk. XIII, Chap. 9.

it is clear that he does not neglect it. What he wants most is to teach people to live properly; and that teaching does not at all exclude them from acquisition and enjoyment of wealth in righteous ways. As for the criticism that it has been used as a main support of absolutism, that is also inapplicable to the philosophy itself. It has been misused and misinterpreted; but that it has been so cannot be said to be its fault. As a matter of fact, Confucius does not only disapprove of absolutism, but actually approves of the so-called right of revolution. It is written by him in "The Book of Changes" that "when King Tang and King Wu revolted, they were in accordance with Heaven's decree and the people's desire."[1] It is true that the later monarchs did exploit his doctrine of righteousness and exacted absolute obedience from the people. But then this was simply a misinterpretation by them of his theory. What he said was that everyone in the state, the sovereign included, should be dutiful, and not the subjects alone. In his own words, "Let the prince be prince, and the minister minister." So we see that it is a collateral responsibility, the action of each being conditional upon that of the other. If the prince wants his minister to be minister, he must first of all be prince. Otherwise, if he be not a prince himself, it is implied that his minister may not be minister.

[1] "The Phenomenon of Revolution."

So the philosophy is by no means aristocratic, as many Westerners have come to believe. It is a philosophy that demands every one at once to fulfill his duties and yet be benevolent to one another. Thus we see that both the charges of the Chinese modernists are untrue, and that out of the grinding mill of criticism the philosophy of Confucius has emerged as intact and as complete as when it was first conceived.

But we are not here to defend Confucianism. We are here to state what it is. So let us conclude with a reiteration of its fundamental principles. These are two. The first is its emphasis of government by men, or the theory of converting the people to virtue by personal example. The second is the conception of the rule of propriety, or the principle of inculcating righteousness and benevolence in men by the help of an ethical code. The first aims to thrust upon the people a responsibility to "establish himself as well as others." The second purposes to compel the people to learn proper living by the sheer force of a moral atmosphere.

Perhaps it is next to impossible for anyone but a Chinese to form an exact estimate of these theories except the man who gave them voice. But none may disagree, we think, with the words of von der Gabelentz: "If we are to measure the greatness of a historic personage, I can only see one standard applicable for the purpose: the effectiveness of that person's influence according

to its dimensions, duration, and intensity. If this standard be applied, Confucius was one of the greatest of men. For even at the present day, after a lapse of more than two thousand years, the moral, social, and political life of about one-third of mankind continues to be under the full influence of his mind."[1]

[1] "Quoted by H. H. Gowen in "An Outline History of China," pp. 64-65.

CHAPTER XI

MENCIUS AND HSUANTZE

AMONG the numerous disciples of Confucius during this period, only two men left independent teachings. These were Mencius and Hsuantze. While the theories of both were undoubtedly founded upon the philosophy of the great sage, they were at once different from the original source from which they had sprung as well as different from each other. The reason for these dissimilarities is chiefly centered in their divergent views concerning human nature. Confucius holds that human nature is capable of both good and evil and that environment and association are the force that control its development. So he establishes the rule of propriety on the one hand to fence it from evil, and maintains the ideals of benevolence and righteousness on the other to cultivate in it the seeds of good. Mencius, however, takes a different standpoint in this particular. It is his belief that human nature is fundamentally good. With this as a premise, he proceeds to develop a philosophy which is characterized at the same time by its glorification of the Confucian ideals and its neglect of the rule of propriety. Thus, though he refuses to admit it, he is a Confucianist who is inclined not a little towards the teachings of Micius.

Directly opposed to the standpoint of Mencius, however, we have that of Hsuantze, another great disciple of the most revered sage of China. Instead of agreeing with Mencius that human nature is fundamentally good, Hsuantze is convinced that it is essentially evil. Hence, the philosophy of the latter is occupied mostly with finding ways and means to regulate and control the malicious tendencies of human nature. In this way, he is led to lay special stress upon the rule of propriety and little weight upon the ideals of benevolence and righteousness. Thus, in his doctrines we find the intermediate links between Confucianism and Legalism.

The dates of Mencius' birth and death are difficult to ascertain. According to recent researches, they are fixed respectively at 372 and 289 B.C.[1] This fact is significant in that it explains in part the reason for Mencius' fame. It indicates that Mencius lived in the very middle of the period when China was infested with swarms of "isms," and thus explains how he has come to be revered by the Chinese as a teacher second to none but the great sage, owing to his able championship of the cause of Confucianism. This is verified by his works which consist of hardly anything but his debates with others, his gallant inroads into the territories of what he calls "perverse doctrines," and his capable

[1] See S. Hu, "The History of Chinese Philosophy," Vol. I, p. 289.

defence of the Confucian ideals of benevolence and righteousness. There is a passage in which he justifies this course of conduct on his part, and which is worth reciting:

> "In former times, Emperor Yü repressed the Great Flood, and the empire was reduced to order. The duke of Chow subjugated the barbarous tribes of the west and the north, drove away all ferocious animals, and the people enjoyed repose. Confucius completed "The Spring and Autumn Annals," and rebellious ministers and villainous sons were struck with terror by his criticisms.
>
> "I also wish to rectify men's hearts, to put an end to those perverse doctrines, and to oppose their one-sided actions and banish their licentious expressions, and thus to carry on the work of the three sages. Do I do so because I am fond of disputing? I am compelled to do it."[1]

But, however noble his aim may be and however great his service to the cause of Confucianism, we are inclined to believe that Mencius has been somewhat overestimated by the Chinese people in general. His theories are neither very original nor very comprehensive. Moreover, even from a purely Confucianistic standpoint, it may not be said that Mencius has a complete and firm grasp of the philosophy of his most eminent teacher. He is one-sided and unbalanced. He overlooks practical difficulties in his reaching out for ideals. All these, as we have intimated in our introduction, are mainly due to this one belief of his—that human nature is fundamentally and essentially good.

[1] Mencius, Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

Whence comes this belief? In the first place, Mencius deems it an indisputable fact that all human beings are gifted with similar senses. Thus, says he:

"All things which are the same in kind are like to one another. Why should we doubt this in regard to man, as if he were a solitary exception?

"Men's mouths are alike in having the same relishes; their ears are alike in enjoying the same sounds; their eyes are alike in recognizing the same beauty. Can it be that their minds alone lack similarity?"[1]

As an answer to this last question, we have this conviction, that the original, essential quality of human nature is good, and that all human beings possess this nature. He affirms:

"All men have minds which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. Now, if men suddenly see a child about to fall into a well, they will, without exception, experience a feeling of alarm and distress. They will feel so, not in order to gain the favor of the child's parents, nor to seek the praise of their neighbors and friends, nor from a dislike for the sound that the fall of the child may cause.

"From this case we may perceive that the feeling of commiseration is natural to man, that the feeling of shame and dislike is common to all men, that the feeling of modesty and complaisance is natural to man, and that the feeling of approval and disapproval is common to man.

"The feeling of commiseration is the basis of benevolence. The feeling of shame and dislike is the basis of righteousness. The feeling of modesty and complaisance is the basis of propriety. The feeling of approval and disapproval is the basis of knowledge."[2]

[1] Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 7.
[2] Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

Thus he holds that all men are equal and all men are capable of becoming sages.[1] So he continues:

"Men have these four principles just as they have their four limbs. When men, having these four principles, yet say of themselves that they cannot develop them, they play the thief with themselves; and he who says of his prince that he cannot develop them, plays the thief with his prince.

"Since all men have these four principles in themselves, let them learn how to give them all possible development and completion, and the issue will be like that of fire which has begun to burn, or that of a spring which has begun to bubble forth. Let them find complete development, and they will be able to love and protect all within the four seas. Let them be denied that development, and they will not suffice a man in the serving of his parents."[2]

In short, Mencius believes that all men possess the potentiality of becoming perfectly righteous and benevolent without any outside help. This point we must bear in mind, for it has important bearing upon his conceptions of the functions of government, that we shall presently analyze.

But before we do that, we have a question to which we must find an answer. If Mencius holds that all men are fundamentally good, how, then, is he going to account for the appearance of evil and depravity in men? This, he explains, is mainly due to external influences.

"The tendency of men's nature toward good is like the tendency of water to flow downward. There are none who have not this tendency toward good, just as all water flows downward.

"Now by striking water and causing it to leap up, you may make it go over your forehead, and, by damming it

[1] See Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 7.
[2] Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

up and leading it, you may force it up a hill. But are such movements according to the nature of water? It is the force applied which causes it to go against its nature. When men are made to do what is not good, they are also forced in this same way."[1]

What are the external influences that cause men to go astray from their natural, right paths? This has not been fully explained by Mencius. But judging by the general trend of his thought, we find that there are two things. In the first place, material necessity may compel a man to turn to evil deeds.

"Mencius said, 'In good years the children of the people are most of them trustworthy, while in bad years most of them abandon themselves to evil. It is not owing to their natural powers conferred by Heaven that they are thus different. The abandonment is owing to the circumstances through which they allow their minds to be ensnared and drowned in evil."[2]

Then, in the second place, there are those "perverse doctrines" that confuse right and wrong and perplex the understanding of men. How they may corrupt human nature is illustrated by the following parable:

"Mencius said to Tai Pu Sheng, 'I see that you are desiring your king to be virtuous, and I will plainly tell you how he may be made so. Suppose that there is a great officer of the state of Ch'u here, who wishes his son to learn the speech of Ch'i. Will he in that case employ a man of Ch'i as his tutor, or a man of Ch'u?'

"'He will employ a man of Ch'i to teach him,' was the answer.

[1] Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 2.
[2] Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 7.

> "Mencius went on: 'If but one man of Ch'i be teaching him, and there be a multitude of men of Ch'u continually shouting about him, although his father beat him every day, wishing him to learn the speech of Ch'i, it will be impossible for him to do so. But in the same way, if he were to be taken and placed for several years in some districts of the state of Ch'i, though his father should beat him, wishing him to speak the language of Ch'u, it would be impossible for him to do so." [1]

This approaches the conception of Confucius that association is the force that conduces to either good or evil. But influenced by his other doctrine that human nature is essentially good, Mencius' scheme of ameliorating the association of men is not founded upon the creation of an ethical atmosphere congenial to virtue, but simply upon the riddance of those external influences which tend to pervert men from their original nature.

Thus we come to the two principal political theories of Mencius: His denunciation of the legalistic principle of expediency, and his advocation of the paternalistic doctrine of solicitude for the material welfare of the people. Living in an age when Legalism was rampant, when every state was bent upon a policy of conquest and expansion, and when every ruler considered things solely from the standpoint of his own selfish advantage, Mencius could not help regarding the principle of expediency as the chief obstacle in the way of men's natural development, to the attaining of benevolence and righteousness. So

[1] Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 6.

he made it his principal occupation throughout his life to combat such a "perverse doctrine." "The Book of Mencius" records his conversation with King Hui of Liang, which may be well quoted here as an illustration of our point:

"The king said, 'Venerable Sir, since you have not counted it far to come here, a distance of a thousand li, may I presume that you are likewise provided with counsels to profit my kingdom?'

"Mencius replied, 'Why must your Majesty use that word "profit"? What I am "likewise" provided with are counsels to benevolence and righteousness, and these are my only topics.'

"'If your Majesty say "What is to be done to profit my kingdom?" the great officers will say, "What is to be done to profit our families?" and the inferior officers and the common people will say, "What is to be done to profit our persons?" Thus superiors and inferiors will try to snatch profit the one from the other; and the kingdom will be endangered. In the kingdom of ten thousand chariots, the murderer of his sovereign shall be the chief of a family of a thousand chariots. In the kingdom of a thousand chariots, the murderer of his sovereign shall be the chief of a family of a hundred chariots. To have a thousand in ten thousand and a hundred in a thousand, cannot be said to be a small allotment; but if righteousness be put last, and profit be put first, they will not be satisfied without trying to snatch all.'"[1]

Statement of similar sentiments is abundant in the book of Mencius. But we shall just recite one more to further illustrate this point.

"Sung K'eng (a pacifist of the time) being about to go to Ch'u, Mencius met him in Shih-Ch'iu.

"'Sir,' asked Mencius, 'where are you going?'

"Sung K'eng replied, 'I have heard that Ch'i and Ch'u are fighting together, and I am going to see the King of Ch'u and persuade him to cease hostilities.'

[1] Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 1.

"Mencius said, 'I will not venture to ask about the particulars, but I should like to hear the scope of your plan. What course will you take to try to persuade them?'

"Sung K'eng answered, 'I will tell them how unprofitable their course is to them.'

"'Sir,' said Mencius, 'your aim is great, but your argument is not sound.'

"'If you, starting from the point of profit, offer your persuasive counsels to the kings of Ch'i and Ch'u, and if those kings are pleased with the consideration of profit so as to stop the movements of their armies, then all belonging to those armies will rejoice in the cessation of war, and find their pleasure in the pursuit of profit. Ministers will serve their sovereign for the profit of which they cherish the thought; sons will serve their fathers, and younger brothers will serve their elder brothers from the same consideration; and the issue will be that, abandoning benevolence and righteousness, sovereign and minister, father and son, younger brother and elder, will carry on all their intercourse with this thought of profit cherished in their breasts. But never has there been such a state, or society, without ruin being the result of it.'"[1]

The gist of Mencius' arguments may be summarized in this way: The desire for profit is the fountain of strife. It is the thing which misguides human nature and transforms it from good into evil. Without polluting the people's minds by such a principle, the government may find it far easier to regulate the people. Otherwise, every person in the state will only cherish this selfish desire in his heart, and the government will be crushed under the weight of private interests. Then disorder will ensue, and benevolence and righteousness will be lost to men. So against the

[1] Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 5.

advocates of the principle of expediency and profit, Mencius exercises little reserve in his denunciation.

> "Those who now-a-days serve their sovereigns say, 'We can for our sovereign, enlarge the boundaries of his territory and fill his treasuries and arsenals.' Such persons are now-a-days called 'able ministers'; but in ancient times they were called 'robbers of the people.'
>
> "Or they will say, 'We can, for our sovereign form alliances with other states so that our wars must be successful.' Such persons are now-a-days called 'able ministers'; but in ancient times they were called 'robbers of the people.'"[1]

Again:

> "They fight in order to gain a tract of land, and they slaughter men till the fields are filled with them. They fight in order to seize a city, and they slaughter men till the city is filled with them. This is called 'leading on the land to devour human flesh.' Death is not enough for such a crime.
>
> "Therefore, those who are skilled in fighting should suffer the highest punishment. Next to them should be punished those who unite princes in leagues; and next to them those who take in grassy commons, imposing the cultivation of the ground on the people."[2]

This completes the negative side of Mencius' political philosophy. As for his positive side, it is equally influenced by his fundamental doctrines that we have explained above. As he firmly believes that human nature is essentially good, so we find no philosopher more convinced than he of the possibility of converting the people to virtue by personal example. This may even be observed

[1] Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 9.
[2] Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 14.

in the arguments which he has just advanced against the legalistic principle of expediency. He has denounced it, not only because it perverts those who practice it, but because it sets up corrupt examples for the people to follow. Conversely, therefore, Mencius fastens his faith upon the theory of government by exemplary man. Following closely in the footsteps of his great teacher, he says: "People have this common saying—'The empire, the state, the family.' The root of the empire is in the state. The root of the state is in the family. The root of the family is in the individual."[1] This idea he expounds further in the following passage:

> "If a man love others and no responsive attachment is shown to him, let him turn inwards and examine his own benevolence. If he tries to rule others and his governing is unsuccessful, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom. If he treats others politely, and they do not return his politeness, let him turn inwards and examine his own feeling of respect.
>
> "When we do not, by what we do, realize what we desire, we must turn inwards and examine ourselves in every point. When a man's person is correct, the whole empire will turn to him with recognition and submission."[2]

Thus he concludes, "Let the prince be benevolent, and all will be benevolent. Let the prince be righteous, and all will be righteous. Let the prince be correct, and all will be correct. Once the prince is rectified the kingdom will be firmly settled."[3]

[1] Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 5.
[2] *Id.*, Chap. 4.
[3] *Id.*, Chap. 20.

But his obsession by this fundamental principle, that human nature is essentially good, is shown at this juncture to lead Mencius to emphasize benevolence more than righteousness. Nor is Mencius' conception of benevolence entirely in accordance with Confucius' idea that as one seeks to establish himself, so must he seek to establish others. Mencius' benevolence is more narrow than the Confucian principle; it is confined chiefly to the solicitude for the material welfare of the people. As we have explained above, he thinks that one of the great impediments to men in the development of their natures and the proper leading of their lives is material circumstances. So he makes it a duty of the sovereign to better them for the people. Says he:

"Only men of quality are able to maintain a fixed heart without a certain livelihood. As to the people, if they are not assured of a livelihood, they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license. When they have thus been involved in crime, to follow them up and punish them is to entrap the people. Under the rule of a benevolent man, how can such a thing as entrapping the people be tolerated?

"Therefore, an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people so as to make sure that, above, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, below, sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children; that in good years they shall always be abundantly satisfied, and that in bad years they shall escape the danger of dying. After this he may urge them, and they will proceed to what is good, for in this case the people will follow after that with ease.

"Now, the livelihood of the people is so regulated that, above, they have not sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, below, they have not sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children. Notwithstanding good years, their lives are continually embittered; and in bad years they do not escape the danger of dying. In such circumstances, they only try to save themselves from death, and are afraid they will not succeed. What leisure have they to cultivate propriety and righteousness?"[1]

So in Mencius' opinion, the first essential for making people attain to proper and righteous living is to provide them with a certain livelihood. But how is this to be done? In the first place, the government must do nothing to disturb the people in their regular pursuits, nor to exploit their labor or their resources. Continuous warfare and unrestricted cupidity for personal gratification on the part of rulers generally produces such evil results, and are, therefore, condemned by Mencius.

"If the seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than can be eaten. If close nets are not allowed to enter the pools and ponds, the fishes and turtles will be more than can be consumed. If the axes and bills enter the hills and forests only at the proper time, the wood will be more than can be used. When the grain and fish and turtles are more than can be eaten and there is more wood than can be used, this enables the people to nourish their living and bury their dead without any feeling against anyone. This condition, in which the people nourish their living and bury their dead without any feeling against anyone, is the first step for the government to take."[2]

Again, we read from the Book of Mencius:

"King Hui of Liang said, 'I wish to receive your instructions.'

[1] Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 7.
[2] Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

"Mencius replied, 'Is there any difference between killing a man with a stick and with a sword?' The King said, 'There is no difference.'

"'Is there any difference between doing it with a sword and with a government?' 'There is no difference,' was the reply.

"Mencius then said, 'In your kitchen there is fat meat; in your stables there are fat horses. But your people have the look of hunger, and on the wilds there are those who have died of famine. This is leading on beasts to devour men.

"'Beasts devour one another, and men hate them for doing so. When a prince, being the parent of his people, administers his government so as to be chargeable with leading on beasts to devour men, where is that parental relation to the people?'"[1]

Based upon this presumption, Mencius proceeds to develop a doctrine of "benevolent government." He advises the rulers to share their fortune with their people, to consider the people's happiness as their happiness, and the people's grief as their grief. Taxes must be light and burdens must be few, so that the people may enjoy repose and prosperity with few cumbersome restrictions, and so that a firm foundation may be found for the cultivation of the Confucian ideals in the state.

In the second place, Mencius has a more constructive program for the government to carry out in order to give the people sufficient wherewith to lead proper and virtuous lives. He strongly advocates the reëstablishment of the so-called "Well-land System," which is somewhat

[1] Bk. 1, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

state-communistic, as we have explained in our second chapter, and which he deems capable of guaranteeing a certain livelihood to all the people. We shall quote his statement about the system once more to illustrate our present point:

> "A square li forms a Well, having altogether nine hundred acres. In the center of the Well is the public land; the rest is occupied by eight families, a hundred acres for each. The public land is cultivated by all of them"[1]

Whether this system had ever been actually put into practice before the time of Mencius, or whether it was entirely and solely an ingenious invention of the philosopher himself, has been a question undecided by the native scholars of China for centuries. But one thing, however, cannot admit of any possibility of doubt. That is, that Mencius is strongly in favor of such a scheme. Thus he goes on and prescribes rules for the people under it:

> "Let mulberry trees be planted about the homesteads with their five acres, and persons of fifty years may be clothed in silk. In keeping fowls, pigs, dogs, and swine, let not their times of breeding be neglected, and persons of seventy years may eat meat. Let there not be taken away the time that is proper for the cultivation of the farm with its hundred acres, and the family of several mouths that is supported by it shall not suffer from hunger."[2]

But Mencius' advocacy of this system, we must always bear in mind, is not due to any recognition on his part of the inherent justice of the

[1] Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3.
[2] Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

scheme, but due to his belief that it is the best way to guarantee the people a certain livelihood and thus enable them to lead a proper and salutary life. So he says, in one place, "The able-bodied, during their hours of leisure, shall cultivate their filial piety, fraternal respectfulness, sincerity, and trustfulness, serving thereby their fathers and brothers at home and their elders and superiors abroad."[1] In another, he affirms:

> "Establish different schools for the instruction of the people. . . . The object of them all is to illustrate the human relations. When these are thus illustrated by superiors, kindly feeling will prevail among the inferior people below. . . .
>
> "In the fields of a district, those who belong to the same Well will render all friendly offices to one another in their going out and coming in, aid one another in keeping watch and ward, and sustain one another in sickness. Thus the people are brought to live in affection and harmony."[2]

Briefly, these are then the main theories of Mencius. Following his greater teacher, he believes that the highest aim of the state is to uplift its subjects to the acme of moral excellence. But dominated by the conviction that human nature is fundamentally good, he does not deem it necessary to confine it within restrictions, but thinks instead that the ideal can be attained by merely assuring the people of a certain livelihood, by freeing them from the contamination of "perverse doctrines," and by establishing for them virtuous examples to follow. So in his works we find

[1] Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 5.
[2] Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

abundant praises for the Confucian ideals of benevolence and righteousness, but hardly any for that other complementary part of the Confucian philosophy — the rule of propriety.

The merits of such a theory are self-evident. It is thoroughly democratic. It elevates the position of the individual. It has for its cardinal principle the equality of men; and it renders no more homage to the sovereign than to the subject. Thus we find that Mencius approves of the right of revolution and believes in the doctrine that government exists, and should exist, only for the governed. In one place, he says:

> "When the prince regards his ministers as his hands and feet, his ministers regard him as their belly and heart. When he regards them as his dogs and horses, they regard him as a casual acquaintance. When he regards them as mud or grass, they regard him as a robber and an enemy."[1]

In another, he justifies the conduct of King T'ang and King Wu in overthrowing their respective sovereigns.

> "King Hsüan of Ch'i asked, saying, 'Was it so that T'ang banished Chieh and King Wu smote Chow?'
>
> "Mencius replied, 'It is so in the records.'
>
> "The king said, 'May a subject then put his sovereign to death?'
>
> "Mencius said, 'He who outrages the benevolence proper to his nature is called a robber. He who outrages righteousness, is called a ruffian. The robber and ruffian we call a mere fellow. I have heard of the execution of the fellow Chow; but I have not heard of the putting of a sovereign to death in his case."[2]

[1] Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 3.
[2] Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 8.

Not only does Mencius believe that the people possess a right of revolution, but he also thinks that it is the duty of the sovereign to consult and follow public opinion in fulfilling his duties. Thus we read some of his advice to a prince:

> "When all those about you say, 'This is a man of talent and worth,' you may not, for that reason, believe it. When your great officers all say, 'This a man of talent and worth,' still you may not, for that reason, believe it. When all the people say, 'This is a man of talent and worth,' then examine into the case, and when you find that the man is such, employ him.
>
> "When all those about you say, 'This man will not do,' do not listen to them. When all your great officers say, 'This man will not do,' still you may not listen to them. When the people all say, 'This man will not do,' then examine into the case, and when you find that the man will not do, send him away.
>
> "It is only when you act in this way that you are able to be the parent of the people." [1]

In short, the democratic principle of Mencius may be summarized by one of his own statements: "The people are the most important element in a nation. The land and its products are the next. The sovereign is the least important of the three." [2]

But the defects of Mencius' theory are no less clear than its merits. He has set up high ideals, but he has not advanced sufficient methods for the realization of them. Between him and Micius, there is a striking resemblance. While the former preaches universal love, Micius emphasizes

[1] Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 7.
[2] Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 14.

benevolence. While the former condemns war, Micius denounces the principle of expediency. While the former is extremely solicitous of material welfare for the people, Micius also lays special stress upon the same point. Then, they are met with the same criticisms. They both have failed to contrive a scheme to make the execution of their principles practical and expedient. They both have been able to convince the people that their ideals are lofty and good; but neither has been able to understand that those are the ideals that everyone wishes others to practice but fears to practice himself. In this respect, Mencius has erred even to a much greater extent than Micius. For, in the case of the latter, there is still a religious background to fall back upon; but in the case of Mencius, there is nothing to guarantee even the remotest possibility of the realization of his scheme but his ultra-optimistic believe in the goodness of human nature. Thus we see that Mencius' philosophy is one-sided and unbalanced. He has attempted to erect the Confucian citadels of benevolence and righteousness among men, but has forgotten to strengthen their foundation with the rule of propriety.

Directly opposed to Mencius' theory, is that of Hsuantze, who lived probably between 310 and 230 B.C.[1] Like Mencius, Hsuantze exalts Confucius and confutes other philosophers. But,

[1] See S. Hu, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 303-305.

unlike Mencius, he believes that human nature is fundamentally evil, and thus develops a political theory entirely different from that which we have just outlined.

The whole trend of Hsuantze's thought may be seen in one of his well-known statements:

> "Human nature is evil. When it becomes good, it is entirely due to artifice. Now, take human nature as it is: It is born with desires and likes; as we follow them, strife arises and the spirit of self-sacrifice and complaisance is lost. It is born with dislike and hate; as we follow them, treachery and banditry arise and loyalty and trustfulness are lost. It is born with the senses of hearing and of sight, which are fond of delightful sounds and ravishing beauty; as we follow them, license and confusion arise and propriety and righteousness are lost. Thus, if we follow human nature and act according to human sentiments, the outcome will be nothing but strife, encroachment upon others' rights, confusion of reason — in short, violence. Hence, we must have the contrivances of education and law and the teachings of propriety and righteousness, so that we may act from the basis of self-sacrifice and complaisance and in accordance with reason, and thus we are enabled to attain good government." [1]

From this it may be observed that Hsuantze is not so idealistic as Confucius or Mencius. His aim is not to lift the people up to the highest levels of moral excellence — to attain an ideal state wherein everyone will be benevolent and righteous by nature. This he deems impossible because of the existence in men themselves of natural obstacles. Instead, the aim of his state is only to attain good government, that is, to enable the people to live harmoniously together,

[1] Hsuantze, Chap. 23.

to restrict their own selfish desires, and not to encroach upon others' rights. So, throughout Hsuantze's theory, we hear little of benevolence and righteousness, but much of the rule of propriety.

All these are made clear in his theory of the origin of the state. According to him, there are two factors which make the establishment of the state possible. First, men are naturally gregarious. Second, men are capable of recognizing each other's rights. Without either of these two factors, it will be impossible for a state to exist. Why are men gregarious? Because it is necessary for them to be so in order to maintain their own existence. "Their strength is not as great as that of a bull; their speed is not as fast as that of a horse." Unless they be gregarious, they will not be able to subjugate the wild beasts and build dwellings and cities.[1] Why are men capable of recognizing each other's rights? Because it is the only way that men can be gregarious. Without a clear understanding of each other's rights, there will be confusion and strife. Thus:

> "If men live separately and do not help each other, they will be destitute. If they live together and yet do not have a distinction in rights, they will contend with one another. Destitution is a synonym for danger; and contention is a synonym for calamity. In order to escape the danger and avert the calamity, nothing is better than distinguishing the rights of each another so that men may become gregarious.

[1] Hsuantze, Chap. 9.

"If the strong intimidate the weak, the cunning frighten the simple, the inferior disobey the superior, and the young oppresses the old; and if the government is not conducted according to virtue; then the old and the weak will be left destitute without nourishment, and there will be strife among the able-bodied. If everybody dislikes work and duty and yet desires honor and profit, and if there is no distinction in rights among the various occupations, then there will be danger of the people's avoiding work and quarreling for honor. If there is no propriety in the union of the sexes, in the distinction between husband and wife, and in various processes of marriage and engagement, then there will be possibilities of discord and rivalry.

"Hence, the wise establish for the people distinctions in rights."[1]

Here, then, comes another great difference between Hsuantze and Mencius. While the latter holds that all men are equal, Hsuantze believes entirely the opposite theory. He recognizes disparities among men, especially in the matter of intelligence, and he thinks that unless those disparities are recognized and their respective rights are clearly defined and established, there will be no possibility of either good government or state.

"The people live together. They seek the same things but in different ways. Their desires are alike, but their intelligence varies. Life always gives them some capability; in that both the wise and the simple are similar. But their capabilities differ from each another. Thus the wise and the simple are separated.

"Now, as they live under the same circumstances but with differing intelligence, as they act according to their selfish impulses and receive no check, and as they let loose their desires and are not curbed; the people's minds become violent and cannot be pleased.

[1] Chap. 10.

"This is because the wise are not given their due rights. Because the wise are not given their due rights, affairs are not completed. Because affairs are not completed, the multitude are not settled. Because the multitude are not settled, there is no distinction between sovereign and subject. Because there is no sovereign to control the subjects, and because there is no superior to control the inferiors, the whole world does injury to life by letting loose its desires. Its desires are centered upon the same things; but the desires are many and the things are few. Since they are few, strife arises." [1]

So, unlike Mencius, Hsuantze pays special homage to the position of the sovereign. He thinks that the sovereign is the chief instrument which makes the state possible, for it is through him that distinctions of rights are made and the people are thus enabled to live harmoniously together and to enjoy all the advantages of such a state.

"Men cannot live except together. But if they live together without distinction of rights, contentions will arise. As contentions arise, confusion begins. When confusion prevails, men will become destitute. Hence the lack of the distinction in rights is a great cause of injury to men; and the existence of such a distinction is the foundation of all benefits to the empire.

"Now, the sovereign is the being who controls the hinges of such a distinction. Thus, to glorify him is to glorify the foundation of the empire; to serve him is to serve the foundation of the empire." [2]

Nor is that all. To Hsuantze, the whole political philosophy can be nothing but a discussion of the various ways in which a sovereign may enable his people to live harmoniously together. His theory

[1] Chap. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*

therefore, is entirely created from the sovereign's standpoint, and not from that of the people.

> "What is the principle of government? It is the principle of the sovereign. What is the sovereign? It is he who is able to make the people live together. What is to be able to make the people live together? It is to be good at nourishing men, to be good at classifying men, to be good at regulating men, and to be good at rewarding men. The people will love him who is good at nourishing them. The people will be content with him who is good at classifying them. The people will rejoice in him who is good at regulating them. And the people will honor him who is good at rewarding them. When these four things are centered in one man, the whole empire will render homage to him. This is called 'to be able to make the people live together.'" [1]

But what, after all, is this principle which may enable the sovereign to achieve such results? In answer to this question, Hsuantze falls back upon Confucius' rule of propriety. Says he:

> "Wherein is propriety originated? I reply: 'Men are born with desires. As they desire without limit, so there cannot but be strife. Strife leads to confusion, and confusion leads to misery. The ancient emperors were averse to confusion. Therefore they established propriety and righteousness in order to make men recognize one another's rights, to nourish their desires, to satisfy their needs, to not limit their desires to material things, and to not make the material things yield to their desires." [2]

The gist of the whole principle so far is, therefore, exactly like that of the Confucian theory. Through the establishment of rules of propriety, Hsuantze endeavors to inculcate in the people a

[1] Chap. 12.
[2] Chap. 19.

consciousness of their respective positions and obligations. But he does not stop at this. While Confucius aims only at creating an ethical atmosphere to instil an understanding of the general principles of human relationships and an aptitude for benevolence and complaisance in the people, Hsuantze goes into further detail and wants the people to know that there are gradations of men and that each must keep to his own grade. So in Hsuantze's rule of propriety, one of the first essentials is to make clear those gradations. Says he:

> "When two men are equally distinguished, each will not be willing to serve the other. When two men are of equally humble rank, each will not be able to command the other. This is natural.
>
> "Now, if the circumstances and positions of all are equal and their desires are similar, the things that they desire will not be sufficient to supply them all, and strife will arise. Strife leads to confusion; confusion leads to misery. The ancient emperors were averse to confusion. Therefore they established rules of propriety in order to distinguish the several rights of men, so that there are the gradations of poverty and wealth of lowliness and nobility, etc. This is the fundamental principle of nourishing the empire." [1]

Thus, Hsuantze proceeds to prescribe minute rules of propriety for the several gradations of people. "By propriety," he declares, "I mean that there are ranks between the noble and the lowly, differences between the old and the young, and various regulations established, accordingly,

[1] Chap. 9.

to fit, respectively, the poor and the rich, the insignificant and the weighty."[1] Based upon this premise, nothing seems too small for Hsuantze to apply his rule of propriety to. He even goes so far as to provide different hats and garments for the various grades of the people to wear. By compelling the people to observe such minute rules, he thinks that they may be made to understand exactly what their positions are, and they will not dare to desire anything beyond what is prescribed by his rule of propriety.[2] In short, he wants to cultivate in man a habitual contentment with his lot. Thus he says:

"To be so honored as to occupy the throne and to be so rich as to possess the world—this is what everyone desires. Now, if we let everyone have his desire, we shall find that both circumstances and the coveted objects of desire are not sufficient for all. Hence, the ancient emperors established the rules of propriety in order to distinguish the different rights of men so that there were ranks of lowliness and nobility, differences in age and youth, divisions of the wise and the simple, and of the capable and the incapable. All these are with the purpose of giving each man his due and making him satisfied with his lot. . . . This is the way to live harmoniously together.

"Hence, when a virtuous man occupies the place above, the farmers will endeavor to the best of their ability to farm well; the merchants will endeavor to the best of their ability to trade with sagacity; the craftsmen will endeavor to work to the best of their skill; and the various officers and feudal lords will endeavor as far as possible to fulfill their duties with virtue and wisdom. This is called perfect equilibrium. Thus, under such a scheme, he who possesses the whole empire does not think that he has too

[1] Chap. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*

much; and he who guards a gate and keeps watch in the night does not think that he has too little."[1]

Such, then, are the theories of Hsuantze. As he believes that human nature is fundamentally evil, what he aims at is not to lift the people up to the highest levels of moral excellence, but to contrive a way to make harmonious association among men possible. As he deems that men are not born equal, especially so in intelligence, he thinks that the best way to achieve a harmonious state is to recognize these differences and give each man his due. This he purposes to do by means of rules of propriety. He would regulate the daily routine of the people. He would impress upon them continually the necessity of their observing such regulations. He would thus force upon them a habit of feeling contented with their own lot and wishing for no more. When everyone in the state is imbued with such a spirit, then, in Hsuantze's opinion, a perfect equilibrium is attained, and good government will be the result.

The differences between the Confucian rule of propriety and that of Hsuantze are clear. In the first place, while the great sage's theory is to make everyone understand his duties to others, that of Hsuantze is to compel him to confine his desires within proper limits. Thus, what Confucius teaches is to be reverent towards one's

[1] Chap. 4.

superior, to be kindly towards one's inferior, to be filial to one's father, and to be loving to one's son. All these are in a positive strain. But turning to Hsuantze, we find his ideas different. He maintains that it is necessary for a state to have different gradations and that it is equally necessary for each one to keep to his class. So his teaching is like this: The superior must not oppress the inferior. The inferior must not disbey the superior. The cunning must not deceive the simple. And the strong must not intimidate the weak. His is, therefore, an entirely negative theory. To make this clearer, we may say that the chief word of Hsuantze's political philosophy is "division," while that of Confucius is "union." Hsuantze wishes to divide the people into classes and to distinguish their rights. But Confucius desires that the people be attached to each other and lays emphasis upon their duties. This is the first fundamental difference between the two rules of propriety. Then, in the second place, while Confucius lays stress only upon the general principles, Hsuantze descends into details. What Confucius intends to accomplish by his rule of propriety is to create an ethical atmosphere congenial to the development of benevolence and righteousness and hostile towards chaos-engendering crime and evil. He employs only social approval and disapproval as the chief means of enforcing his rules; and he leaves the

people as a whole to be the judges of any individual's conduct. Hsuantze wants the people to observe even in the least significant of things the various rules prescribed by his principle of propriety. This he holds to be the foundation of all the distinctions of rights; and it is the sovereign and not the people that he considers to be the source of such distinctions. Hence, while Confucius' theory is democratic, that of Hsuantze is autocratic; while Confucius' rule of propriety is elastic, that of Hsuantze is stereotyped.

Indeed, it does not seem to be a far cry at all from Hsuantze's political philosophy to that of the legalists. There is the same tendency to emphasize the appearances of things. There is the same idea of restricting the individual's rights and activities. If there is any difference between the two at all, it would almost appear to be to the disadvantage of Hsuantze, and not to the legalists. For are not the theories of the latter much more thorough than his? Are not they much simpler, and more truthful in pretending only to what they are able to accomplish? They do not advocate their principles under the camouflage of "harmony," but declare openly for "efficiency" and "expediency." They do not descend into detailed regulations of the people's daily routine, but enact only just sufficient laws to fulfill this purpose.

Thus we see that, like Mencius, Hsuantze is one-sided. While Mencius advocates high ideals

without providing means to achieve them, Hsuantze is engrossed in the contrivance of a means without possessing any ideal. They both have failed to evolve any practicable political theory because they both have been unable to grasp completely the teachings of their common idol—Confucius.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIMARY SOURCES FOR A STUDY OF ANCIENT CHINESE POLITICAL THEORIES

I. For political conceptions prior to the eighth century B.C.

A. *The Book of History.* It contains ancient documents and records pertaining to the early dynasties of the empire, beginning with the reigns of the famous emperors Yao and Shun (2356–2204 B.C.) and ending with the middle of the Chow dynasty. It is supposed to have been edited by Confucius. The book is exceedingly valuable because it is the only volume which gives a more or less historical narrative of this lengthy period. In addition, as it contains many speeches and announcements by famous emperors and great ministers, its utility, to a student of philosophy, whose task it is to analyze the pristine thought of the early stages of society, cannot be overestimated.

B. *The Book of Poetry.* Out of some three thousand ancient odes, Confucius selected 311 and rearranged them according to their character and age, and thus made what is known now as "The Book of Poetry." To a student of philosophy, the Odes are an essential supplement to "The Book of History"; for through them he is able to understand somewhat the social background of the period and to find confirmations for whatever he may have discovered from a study of the latter book.

C. *The Constitution of Chow*, or "The Officers of Chow," or "The Li [propriety] of Chow." The authenticity of this book has been discussed by us in our second chapter. It is what its name implies—a constitution of the government of the Chow dynasty. It is divided into six books dealing respectively with the functions of the prime minister and those of the ministries of education, rites and ceremonies, war and administration, justice, and labor. The present (six) book, however, is not the original one. The original

one has been lost; and the present book was composed by a scholar of a later age to make up for the lack.

II. For a Study of Taoism.

A. *Laotze.* As the writings of most of the ancient Chinese thinkers were either edited after their death or transcribed from their sayings by their disciples, they were generally given no other names but those of the thinkers themselves. So the writings of Laotze are simply called "Laotze." But they, however, are also known under another name—"Tao Teh Ching." This has been translated by some Western authors as "The Canon of Reason and Virtue." The version is far from being correct, for "Tao" has a subtler meaning than "reason" and is the keyword to Laotze's mystic philosophy. The book contains eighty-one chapters; but they are all extremely short.

B. *Chwangtze.* It contains ten volumes and thirty-three chapters. It is also divided into two parts: the inner part and the outer part. A theory has been advanced that the outer part is the result of Chwangtze's studying Laotze's teachings; while the inner part is chiefly an outcome of his own contemplations. In addition to its philosophical value, Chwangtze has ever been regarded by Chinese literati as a model for essay writing. His style is almost as mystic as his philosophy, redolent with subtle turns and replete with figures of speech.

C. *Kwang Yuen* and *Liehtze.* Besides Laotze and Chwangtze, there are two other books avowing the same philosophy. They are Kwang Yuen and Liehtze, both pretending to be disciples of Laotze. These, however, have been found to be spurious works of later times. So we have not included a discussion of them in our present study. The work of Liehtze is noteworthy for one thing: it contains a chapter about a philosopher of the fifth century B.C.—Yang-Chu. It was this philosopher who said that he "would not spare a hair to benefit the world." (See Chapter III, The Golden Age of Chinese Philosophy.)

III. For a Study of Legalism.

A. *Kwangtze.* The authenticity of the book is discussed in the sixth chapter of our work. The book contains

twenty-four volumes and eighty-six chapters. In most chapters, however, the principal topic of discussion is not law and government, but details of administration which are not of value to us at all.

B. *Prince of Shang.* This is the work of the famous statesman and Legalist — Shang Yang. It contains twenty-seven chapters. Although many Chinese scholars have expressed their doubt about both the authenticity of the book and the value of its contents, I believe that it is the best of all the Legalistic writing of this period from the standpoints both of its authenticity and of its value.

C. *Han Fei.* The book contains twenty volumes and fifty-five chapters. Some parts of the book are undoubtedly spurious. But, on the whole, it presents a very good review of the entire thought of Legalism.

IV. For a Study of Micianism.

A. *Micius* or *Mo-Tze.* Motze is a very interesting book, not only from the standpoint of its philosophy, but from that of its writing. For in it, generally and quite regularly, three chapters are devoted to every important subject. They give the same trends of thought, but in different versions, as do the four gospels. The obvious reason is that Micius had three disciples, and the three versions were given severally by them. The book contains altogether fifty-three chapters. Many of them discuss the principles of mechanics, which was a sort of avocation with Micius.

V. For a Study of Confucianism.

A. *The Confucian Analects.* These are principally conversations of Confucius as recorded by his disciples. They are extremely valuable because they give us Confucius' opinions about a thousand and one things, and thus enable us to understand his fundamental principles.

B. *The Great Learning.* This contains the detailed analysis of the process by which one may convert others to virtue by his personal example. This is an exceedingly interesting little outline of Confucian ethics, which has had extraordinary influence on the molding of Chinese character. It contains a text of Confucius and ten chapters of commentaries by one of his disciples.

C. *The Doctrine of the Mean.* This is a compilation of the conversations of Confucius and commentaries by his disciples. The work is supposed to have been edited by the grandson of Confucius.

D. *The Book of Changes.* This is a book of mystery among the Confucian classics. It contains sixty-four Hexagrams, which purport to explain various phenomena in the universe. Only a part of the book, however, is the product of Confucius' pen. In it we find both his metaphysical concepts and some of his political theories.

E. *The Book of Li.* This is the book in which Confucius and his disciples endeavor to explain how the rules of propriety may be used to create an ethical atmosphere congenial to the development of benevolence and righteousness and hostile to crime and violence.

F. *Spring and Autumn Annals.* This is a historical narrative of China between 722 and 481 B.C., written by Confucius. In this work Confucius attempts to praise the virtuous and criticize the evil. Thus Mencius said, "When Confucius completed the *Annals*, rebellious ministers and villainous sons were struck with fear." Though this is not free from exaggeration, it shows what kind of work it is. It has, in addition to the Confucian text, three commentaries by Cho Ch'iu-Ming, Kung Yang, and Ku Liang, all being Confucius' disciples.[1]

G. *The Works of Mencius.* It contains the sayings of the philosopher of that name.[2]

H. *Hsuantze.* Hsuantze is also an advocate of Confucianism. But in his works we find a philosophy directly opposite to that of Mencius.[3] It has twenty volumes and thirty-two chapters.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS SOURCES.

A. *The Sayings of Nations.* This is a peculiar sort of book. It may be regarded as a compilation of miscellaneous records of different feudal states under the rule of the Chow dynasty.

[1] See Chap. 10.
[2] See Chap. 11.
[3] *Ibid.*

B. *The Tablets of Nations.* This consists of various documents of those feudal states, notably memorials written by famous dialecticians and ministers for the perusal of their sovereigns.

C. *The Records of History.* This was written by the famous historian of the first century B.C., Sze-ma Ch'ien. It contains biographies of all the important historical characters before his time.

NOTE: For a study of Legalism, there are also other sources besides those which we have already listed, such as Sheng Tao and Yuen Wen. But the major part of their works has been lost; and whatever remains does not appear worthy of special discussion. So we have not included them in our purlieu. We have, however, used them occasionally for purposes of illustrating and confirming what we have discovered from other sources.[1]

[1] See Chap. 7.